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Come, let us sing the matchless worth,
And sweetly sound the glories forth,
Which in the Saviour shine;
To God through Christ our praises bring,
The song with which the heavens ring,
Now let us gladly join,

How rich the precious blood He shed,
Our ransom from the guilt so dread
Of sin against our God!
How perfect is God’s righteousness,
In which unspotted, beauteous dress
His saints have always stood,

Great are the offices He bears,
And bright His character appears,
Exalted on the throne,
In songs of sweet, unceasing praise,
In solemn hymns and joyful lays,
Make all His glories known!

O, soon the happy day will come
When we shall reach our heavenly home,
And we shall see His face:
Then we our Saviour evermore
Shall praise and worship and adore,
And celebrate His grace,

Adapted from Samuel Medley.
EDITORIAL

Writing to the Corinthians about the same time as he wrote his epistle to the Romans, Paul thanked “God, Who . . . makes us competent dispensers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter is killing, yet the spirit is vivifying” (2 Cor.3:6). He termed this work of dispensing “the dispensation of righteousness” in contrast to “the dispensation of death, by letters chiseled in stone” (2 Cor.3:7-9), given to Israel at Sinai. Concerning this ministry of dispensing an evangel centered on the theme of righteousness, the apostle added: “Therefore, having this dispensation, according as we were shown mercy, we are not despondent. But we spurn the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor yet adulterating the word of God, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in God’s sight” (2 Cor.4:1,2).

In accord with this service of dispensing a message of righteousness, Paul introduced himself to the saints in Rome as “a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the evangel of God (which He promises before through His prophets in the holy scriptures), concerning His Son . . . Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Rom.1:1-5). He was eager to bring this evangel to those in Rome, “For,” he explained, “not ashamed am I of the evangel, for it is God’s power for salvation to everyone who is believing—to the Jew first, and to the Greek as well. For in it God’s righteousness is being revealed, out of faith for faith, according as it is written: ‘Now the just [or, righteous] one by faith shall be living’” (Rom.1:15-17).
Our first thought about Paul's dispensation of righteousness would probably be that he was referring to the message of justification. That certainly was a key element of his teaching on the subject of righteousness. Yet in Romans where Paul presents the evangel of God in detail, before he expounds on the theme of justification he points to the righteousness of God. First of all he tells us there is a revelation of “God’s righteousness” in the evangel (Rom.1:17). Then he tells us that this revelation of God’s righteousness is “out of faith,” which corresponds to his announcement in Romans 3:21,22, that the manifestation of God’s righteousness is “through Jesus Christ’s faith.”

It is only after he speaks of his message as a revelation of God’s righteousness, and then makes it clear that this manifestation of God’s righteousness is channeled through Jesus Christ’s faith, that he comes to the matter of righteousness as it relates to our faith (“for faith,” “on all who are believing”). Justification is firmly established by the righteousness of God as it is revealed through the faith of Jesus Christ.

It is most beneficial to our faith and present living that we perceive and hold to the primacy of the revelation of God’s righteousness in the evangel of God which Paul was dispensing. We see the righteousness of God in His giving of His Son for sinners. We see it in the just act of Christ in dying for sinners, indeed for all mankind. And, with God’s righteousness in view, and with Christ’s righteous work of faith and obedience in dying for sinners in view, we are brought to an appreciation of the righteousness of justification.

As in our last magazine, which centered on Romans 5:18,19, we present further thoughts on these verses in this issue, dwelling especially on what they say about righteousness. Brother Knoch’s brief reminder of the essential relationship between justification and Christ’s death follows this editorial (p.7). Then my article entitled “God’s Evangel Concerning His Son” (p.8) presents a survey of the various ways in which this evangel is expressed in Romans 5.

After this, in more extensive studies, Brother Coram and I offer somewhat new considerations on the Greek word meaning just-effect as it is used in the Scriptures, but especially in Romans 5:16 and 5:18. Some remarks differ in certain respects from those of Brother Knoch and Brother Rogers in our last issue, yet the intent is to build up and not tear down. Of this we may be certain: God’s righteousness permeates the achievement of justification through the death of His Son. And thus it is made manifest.

Some of the problems involved with the translation of the Greek word meaning just-effect were discussed by Brother Knoch in the Unsearchable Riches editorial for March 1953, as follows:

“Although the making of the uniform sublinear was a tremendous and tedious task, the idiomatic version, in which English usage had to be considered, was much more trying. We were exceedingly desirous of translating all the key words connected with justification uniformly, but English usage calls for two stems, just and right, so we had to use both in order to distinguish between justice and righteousness. But the form just-effect cost us the most time and trouble. There seemed to be no question as to the force of the Greek suffix —ma, for it changed judge into judgment, or sentence, the effect of judging. So we had to find some expression to give the effect of justing, just as the suffix —sis expresses the act of justifying, that is, justifying.

“But there was no English word to express this. Connected with the law, on God’s side it referred to His just statute (Luke 1:6; Rom.1:32; Heb.7:1,10). On the human side it seems best expressed by just requirements (Rom. 2:26; 8:4), and as the effect of righteousness in the saints by
just *award*, either as a gratuity (Rom.5:16,18), or for conduct (Rev.15:4; 19:8). In the last instance we have a helpful figure, showing that the effect of just actions was graphically illustrated by the clothing of clean, resplendent cambric, which was *awarded* to the bride for her just conduct.

"Since the version was first issued we have made many efforts to improve this, but we have not found anything better."1

Since there seems to be no single English word corresponding to this Greek word meaning **just-effect**, the problem in providing an idiomatic translation is not so much that several English combinations of words are required, but in deciding what particular combination is fitting for any particular appearance of the Greek word. The best approach for the English reader is to consider every occurrence of the Greek term in its own context. This is the "concordant" method of studying and translating.

The closing contribution in this present issue of our magazine is a reprint of A. E. Knoch's article entitled, *The Human Soul*, first published in volume 36, pages 77-88. We can never truly see the seriousness of death until we see what the Scriptures teach about the soul. Clarity of understanding here opens up clarity of appreciation for the evangel.

We want to know what God says. But this is not for the sake of knowledge itself, but rather for the spiritual blessings that come along with a grasp of truth. The better we understand the evangel which speaks of God's righteousness manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ, the more our love will grow and our joy and peace will increase, and the more truly our reliance will be placed on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind.

D.H.H.

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1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.44, p.49.
JUSTIFICATION BY DEATH

A single mistake, a single sin, cannot be tolerated by a holy God, no matter if it is involuntary. Even if God provides a ransom, a redemption, a pardon, or justification, it must be based on death. Let us never minimize the seriousness of sin. Nothing less than the death of God’s Anointed Himself can put it away.

We had no choice or chance when it comes to sin, not even as Adam seemed to have had (although he also was carrying out God’s intention). All humans are sinners because of Adam’s transgression and the dying state which he transmits to every one of his descendants (Rom.5:12). So also is justification. All will eventually be justified (Rom.5:18), not by their own acts, or by law keeping, but by Christ’s death, even as was the case in condemnation. The death of One Human, Jesus Christ, will eventually justify all. Grace makes all believers just now. Even as mortality makes men sinners in Adam, death justifies them in Christ.

Mortality, our present state of dying, is a confused condition, in which there is a mixture of right and wrong. Mortals can accomplish some commendable deeds, but the tendency is to sin. So also in the case of those in Christ who died with Him and have been roused with Him by faith. The spirit of life in them wills to do well, yet the sin that homes in them keeps them from accomplishing that which they desire (Rom.7:18). Humans are unjust sinners in Adam, whatever good they may perform. So also, saints are justified in Christ, whatever sin they may commit. It is not our acts that really matter, but the one offense of Adam and the one sacrificial death of Christ which count. And it is a great help to us to see the manner of His death. We were crucified with Him like felons, for such we are. Yet we will be glorified with Him like paragons, for such He is.

A. E. Knoch
GOD’S EVANGEL CONCERNING HIS SON

In the first eight chapters of Romans Paul is bringing to us the evangel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In its most fundamental form this message of good news announces that Christ died for our sakes (Rom.5:8). In 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4, this evangel includes the addition that Christ was raised, for this is absolutely necessary in order for the benefits of His death to be realized (cf Rom.4:25; 1 Cor.15:14-19). This means that even when the evangel is reduced to its most essential factor, the death of Christ, in which sin and death are done away with, the resurrected life of Christ out from among the dead is to be assumed. Nevertheless, reduced to its most essential terms, the evangel of God announces that Christ died for our sakes.

There are two parts to this message. The first concerns God’s Son, in what He did: “Christ died,” and the second points to the purpose of this act: It is “for our sakes.” Behind this proclamation is God in action, and in it God is made known. God spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32). In this, God’s righteousness is being revealed, His love is being commended, His power for salvation is operating, His peace is given and His glory is set before us as a matter of expectation.

This evangel is expressed in many ways. In Romans 3:21, 22 the words “Christ died” are brought before us in the phrase, “Jesus Christ’s faith.” And the words “for our sakes” are explained by the statement that “a righteousness of God manifest . . . a righteousness of God . . . ”

The Evangel in Romans Five

for all, and on all who are believing.” In Romans 3:24 the words “in Christ Jesus” and “in grace” and “through the deliverance” convey the message “Christ died.” And the words “Being justified gratuitously” make the phrase “for our sakes” explicit.

In the following arrangement of key wordings of the evangel from Romans 5, the terms corresponding to the message that Christ died are set out by themselves in boldface type, and those corresponding to “for our sakes” follow in ordinary lightface type. Within these latter sections, specific references to the revelation of God are emphasized by the use of italics.

By faith
[we are] being then, justified.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ
we may be having peace toward God,

through Whom
we have the access also, by faith, into this grace in which we stand, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God.

Yet not only so, but we may be glorying also in afflictions, having perceived that affliction is producing endurance, yet endurance testedness, yet testedness expectation. Now expectation is not mortifying, seeing that the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit which is being given to us.

For Christ . . . died
for the sake of the irreverent, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era.

God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.

In His blood,
we are being now justified,
through Him,  
we shall be saved from indignation.

Through the death of [God’s] Son,  
being enemies, we were conciliated to God.

In His life [out from among the dead],  
we shall be saved.

Through our Lord, Jesus Christ,  
we are glorying in God.

Through Whom  
we now obtained the conciliation.

Of the One Man, Jesus Christ,  
the grace of God and the gratuity in grace superabounds to the many.

The gratuity . . . the grace out of many offenses  
[leads] into a just award.

Through the One, Jesus Christ,  
those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life.

Through one just award  
for all mankind for life’s justifying.

Through the obedience of the One,  
the many shall be constituted righteous.

Through righteousness,  
Grace exceeds sin’s increase and reigns for life eonian through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

If this analysis is germane, the terms grace and gratuity, as well as the Greek word rendered “just (award)” and “just (act)” may stand in the place of “Christ died” or in place of “for our sakes” depending of their position in the thought. But however the terms are understood, what is obvious here is that the many benefits presented are based not on human acts and deservings, but solely on God’s gift of His Son, Who died for sinners.

D.H.H.
NOTABLE EFFECTS OF GOD’S OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS

It is ironic that God’s righteousness and its effects—which in truth are the very basis of the actual evangel itself—are usually claimed to preclude what is actually the evangel itself.

Indeed, it is in defense of the doctrine of eternal punishment that it is often said: “The eternal punishment of the lost reveals God’s justice [i.e., His righteousness], even as the eternal life of the saved reveals His love. Therefore, since God is just, eternal punishment must exist.”

The reasoning behind this claim seems to be, Since God is just in all that He does, and one of the things He does is impose eternal punishment, inasmuch as eternal punishment can hardly be an expression of His love, it must therefore be a revelation of His justice.

The defect in the above reasoning is in the falsity of the premise, “One of the things [God] does is impose eternal punishment.”

Since God is the Saviour of all, the above premise in support of the eternal punishment of some, is necessarily mistaken. A saviour is one who saves, and God is the Saviour of all mankind, it being the case as well that He is especially—not, exclusively—the Saviour of believers (1 Tim.4:10).

Indeed, the declaration: “We rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers,” is “a faithful saying,” being as well a saying “worthy of all welcome” (1 Tim.4:9). Therefore, the apostle Paul declares, “These things be charging and teaching” (1 Tim.4:11).
Reposing In Death

Whatever we have to “say,” then, concerning salvation and its scope, must be founded upon and in accord with the faithful and welcome words, “God . . . is the Saviour of all mankind . . . .”

The common failure even to affirm, much less to charge and teach, “these things,” that is, those words of Paul’s of which the central declaration is that we rely on the living God Who is the Saviour of all mankind, calls to mind Paul’s similar entreaty in which he instructs us concerning comfort for the bereaved, saying, “Console one another with these words” (1 Thess.4:18).

“These words” of our apostle are those through which he assures us concerning those who have entered the repose of death, that “If we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him . . . . for the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven . . . . and the dead in Christ shall be rising first. Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord” (1 Thess.4:14-17).

Instead of, however, consoling one another with “these words,” it is usual at funerals or memorial services for those in attendance naming the name of the Lord (among whom we take it that some are genuine believers) to tell vivid tales as to how it is that the one being memorialized did not actually die after all. It is claimed that, rather than reposing in the sleep of death, he or she has instead been transported from an old, inglorious life of mortality on earth, into a new, glorious life of immortality in heaven. To fill out the picture, such things are said as that the “newly-transferred” saint is now going about heaven glad-handing the other heaven-residing saints, besides even being received and personally embraced by the Lord Jesus Himself.

Effects of God’s Grace

May God give us grace to reject cunning fables, ones supposedly scriptural in their substance, prominent among which is the claim that “Many will spend eternity in the fires of hell,” even as the allied claim, as expressed in the celebrated verbiage of the poet Longfellow:

There is no death! What seems so is transition; This life of mortal breath Is but a suburb of the life elysian, Whose portal we call Death.

ILLUSTRATION AND EXEMPLARS

Casting aside such false traditions, let us now consider various notable effects, or products, of God’s own righteousness, as they are scripturally revealed. Specifically, I wish to consider each of the ten passages in which the Greek word dikaiôma (just-effect) appears, giving special attention to those usages of this word in which it has a central place in relation to the evangel of God.

The suffix -ma (-EFFECT) is appended to many Greek nouns or adjectives. It is used to convey the idea of an effect, result, or product of the primary term itself to which it is appended.

A helpful illustration of the force of this word element may be seen in the contrast between charis (joy, grace) and charisma (joy-effect, grace [effect]). Whereas “grace” (charis) speaks of an act producing happiness, which is performed with a view toward the granting of an undeserved benefit (e.g., Rom.4:4; 11:6), “grace [-EFFECT]” (charisma) refers to the result of the corresponding act of grace, that is, to the gracious gift which is thereby granted (e.g., cf Rom.5:15; 11:29).

In Romans 5 alone the suffix -ma is appended to var-

1. The Collected Works of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), from “The Seaside and the Fireside; By the Fireside, ‘Resignation.’”
ious terms in fourteen instances: 5:5: pneumatōs, blow-effect, spirit; 5:15: charisma, grace-effect, grace [i.e., gracious gift]; paraπtōmati, beside-fall-effect, offense; 5:16: dōrêma, give-gush-effect, gratuity; krima, judge-effect, judgment; kataκrima, down-judge-effect, condemnation; charisma, grace-effect, grace [i.e., gracious gift]; paraπtōmaton, beside-fall-effects, offenses; dikaiōma, just-effect, e.g., just [award]; 5:17: paraπtōmati, beside-fall-effect, offense; 5:18: paraπtōmatos, beside-fall-effect, offense; kataκrima, down-judge-effect, condemnation; dikaiōmatos, just-effect, e.g., just [act]; 5:20: paraπtōma, beside-fall-effect, offense.

In its essence, dikaiōma signifies: “the result [or “outworking”] of a right standard.” This is to say of any specific dikaiōma, that it is a just-standard effect, or result. It speaks of something which is the “product” of an already-existing right standard. Indeed, in every instance in Scripture, it speaks of what is the effect of the already-existing right standard of God.

Since English has no single noun which is the equivalent of the Greek noun dikaiōma, what we have endeavored to do in the Concordant Version translation of this word is to employ the English adjective “just” in boldface (which is the equivalent of the Greek stem dik) while supplying in lightface a contextually appropriate noun, one which speaks of whatever “righteous-standard-resulting” entity it may be that is evidently in view.

In the following three passages, it is clearly the just “statutes” of the law that are in view. These statutes result from God’s right standard for human behavior.

Now they were both just in front of God, going in all the precepts and just (statutes) of the Lord, blameless. (Luke 1:6)

Indeed then, the former also had just (statutes) of divine service, besides a worldly holy place. (Hebrews 9:1)
... only in foods and drinks and baptizings excelling, and just (statutes) for the flesh, lying on them unto the period of reformation. (Hebrews 9:10)

In the following passage, “statute” also seems satisfactory, yet not in reference to a statute of Moses’ law, but to a trans-administrational divine “word,” evident to the enlightened conscience:
... those who, recognizing the just (statute) of God, that those committing such things are deserving of death, not only are doing them, but are endorsing, also, those who are committing them. (Romans 11:32)

Again, this just statute is the product of God’s standard of what is right in view of human unrighteousness.

In Romans 2:26, we read: If the Uncircumcision, then, should be maintaining the just (requirements) of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?

Here, “just requirements” seems a satisfactory rendering so long as this is understood in reference to those requirements of the law which accord with principles of rectitude testified to by nature (cf Matt.22:36-40; Rom. 13:8,9; cp Micah 6:8). Such requirements are the results of God’s right standards.

Dikaiōma is used twice in the Unveiling, in each case in reference to the blessings appointed unto the saints of that era and administration, which will be awarded unto them suitably, according to God’s own pleasure and intention:
Who may by no means be afraid of Thee, Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou only art benign. For all the nations shall arrive and worship before Thee, for Thy just (awards) were made manifest. (Revelation 15:4)

3. “Award” is to be distinguished from “reward,” whereas “award” speaks of that which is appropriately “granted” or “bestowed,” whether or not as a reward or compensation (cf 1 Peter 3:7; cp Acts 17:25; John 3:27).
And to her it was granted that she may be clothed in clean, resplendent cambric, for the cambric is the just (awards) of the saints. (Revelation 19:8)

These awards are just because they are the effects of God’s just standards.

OLD AND NEW COVENANTS

The three remaining passages in which dikaiōma appears are all in Romans. Each one addresses vital considerations integral to the evangel of God and the justification of sinners:

that the just (intent) of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit. (Romans 8:4)

According to God’s revealed, preceptive will, the law was given that it should be obeyed. Yet just as surely, according to His hidden, decretive will and intent, it was given that it should be disobeyed (cf Eph.1:11; Rom.9:19; 11:36).

Initially, through Moses, prior to giving the people the law and the conditions of His covenant, Yahweh merely informed the sons of Israel thus, saying: “Now, if you shall hearken, yea hearken to My voice and observe My covenant then you will become Mine, a special possession, above all the peoples, for Mine is all the earth. As for you, you shall become Mine, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation)” (Ex.19:5,6).

Yet knowing no more than this—being ignorant not only of the particulars of the law and the terms of the covenant, but especially of the depravity of their own hearts—Israel,

4. After then having given Israel His law (Ex.20-31), as Yahweh finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave him “two tablets of the testimony [of the covenant], tablets of stone, written with the finger of Elohim” (Ex.31:18). These contained “the ten words” (i.e., the ten precepts, or “commandments,” as recorded in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5; cf Deut.4:13).

in their naiveté and fleshly pride, declared: “All that Yahweh speaks we shall do” (Ex.19:8; cp Deut.5:27).

Subsequently, however, when the people saw that Moses was tardy to descend from the mountain, they quickly withdrew from the way in which Yahweh had instructed them. They assembled themselves against Aaron and said to him: “Rise! Make for us elohim who shall go before us, for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him” (Ex.32:1). Soon, this stiff-necked people, through their swift rebellion and ensuing unbridled, wanton idolatry, had corrupted themselves and voided the covenant (cf Ex.32:1-35; cp Jer.31:32).

Indeed, O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear Yahweh, and keep all His commandments always (cp Deut.5:29, AV; CV: “O that their heart might become this way with them: to fear Me and to observe all My instructions all the days . . .”). “Yet until this day Yahweh has not given to you a heart to realize and eyes to see and ears to hear” (Deut.29:4; cp Prov.4:23).

How marvelous, then, it is to know that in the oncoming eon, under the gracious provision of Yahweh’s new covenant with His national people, He will give the sons of Israel the very thing which they had previously lacked, an obedient heart: “I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I bestow within you, and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. My spirit shall I bestow within you, and I will make it that you shall walk in My statutes and observe My ordinances, and you will obey them” (Ezek.36:26,27; cp Jer.31:31-33).

IMPOSSIBLE TO THE LAW

In their words there in Exodus 19:8, “All that Yahweh speaks we shall do,” Israel epitomized the spirit of the flesh, inherent in the old humanity. Being ignorant of their own intrinsic inability and corruption (cf Rom.8:7;
Delusions of Self-Sufficiency

Eph. 4:22), while at the same time being unthankful to God for whatever goodness and ability they did enjoy, they imagined themselves to be, if not altogether pure, in any case, able and sound. It is the grace of God, indeed, then, as we would consider ourselves, in ourselves, for any of us to discern and freely acknowledge: “I am aware that good is not making its home in me (that is, in my flesh), for to will is lying beside me, yet to be effecting the ideal is not” (Rom. 7:18).

The essence of this nearly universally held delusion of self-sufficiency seems ideally captured in the words of the famous poem “Invictus,”5 of which its most fondly cherished lines are these:

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

The current edition of the Concordant Version, renders Romans 8:4 as follows:

that the just (requirement) of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.

As rendered here, as “just (requirement),” it may be understood in a similar sense as is suggested above for the usage of this phrase as it appears in Romans 2:26. This would be as broadly construed in reference to the deeper import of the law in respect of the pursuit of virtue, generally considered. Thus a true and useful sense may be obtained.

5. “Invictus” was the most popular work of the English poet William Ernest Henley (1849-1903). First published in 1888, it has been included in various anthologies. It is widely regarded as one of the favorite poems of the American people, which speaks volumes about the American people.
certain respect is concerned) which is in view here is the actual intent of the law (in the sense of telic “end,” i.e., goal or consummation) to which it pointed.

This is none other than the revelation of the righteousness of God in the justification of sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ. Even though this righteous and powerful work is only in its incipience at present, even now it is being “fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.”

This selfsame dikaiôma is clearly explicated by Paul in Romans 10:4, and how glorious it is to behold: “Christ is the consummation of ‘law for righteousness’ to everyone who is believing.” This is to say, What was impossible for the law to achieve, God Himself even now is beginning to achieve: the justification of sinners through the faith of Jesus Christ.

That to which the ineffectual system of men following after the precepts of the law in the pursuit of righteousness pointed, is alone realized in Christ Jesus (cf Rom. 9:31; 10:5).

Therefore, I suggest that in Romans 8:4 dikaiôma might be more aptly and clearly rendered:

that the just (intent) of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit.

This just intent is just because it is the outworking of God’s own standard of righteousness for human behavior.

JUSTIFICATION AND CONCILIATION

The two remaining usages of dikaiôma in the Greek Scriptures, are both found in Romans 5, in verses 16 and 18. What is said in each of these verses constitutes a vital part of the full declaration and explication of the evangel.

The evangel is the revelation of the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ’s faith in the justification and conciliation of sinners (cf Rom.1:16,17; 3:22-24; 4:25-5:2; 5:9-11; 12-21). In simplest terms, this is “the evangel of [our] salvation” (cf Eph.1:13).

In order to understand and appreciate the evangel of our justification as well as that of our conciliation, we must have a clear picture of the meaning of each of these terms.

“Justify” is a causative verb. A “causative” is an action verb by which its subject “effects” or produces a change in or concerning its object. For example, “help” means to “cause to be helped”; “raise” means to “cause to be raised”; to “rectify” means to “make or set right”; “homogenize” means to “make homogeneous or uniform”; “purify” means to “make pure or clean.”

Similarly, “justify” means to “cause to be just [or righteous].” To say, then, that God justifies sinners, is to say that God causes sinners to be (i.e., to become) just, or righteous. On behalf of sinners, on the basis of the saving work of Jesus Christ, God will realize His goal, that of constituting just the entire vast complement comprising all mankind (cf Rom.5:18,19).

When we are vivified (1 Cor.15:23), immortal and incorruptible, inhering in bodies of transcendent glory, conformed to the image of God’s Son, we will then, in the highest sense, actually be justified, which is to say, made righteous.

When we speak of our present justification, making mention of ourselves as even now being “justified,” we certainly do not have in mind our present constitution or the whole of our present walk. Instead, we speak of ourselves thus as being justified “in Christ,” and this both in the sense of our close identification with Him as members of His body, and in the sense as well of what God has achieved through Him on our behalf.

And when we say that we are “complete” in Christ (Col. 2:10), we are by no means speaking of any fancied “com-
pleat-ness” in or of ourselves. Instead, we are saying that, in and through Christ’s saving work on our behalf, all has been completed to ensure that in the oncoming eons, we will actually become holy and flawless in God’s sight (Eph.1:4,5).

In any instance where we speak of future glories which God has appointed unto us and speak as if these things were a present reality, we are obviously not speaking literally, for we are by no means unmindful of our present sorry state.

Instead, we are herein speaking proleptically. “Prolepsis” is the figure of anticipation in which one speaks of something future as if already done or existing. That is precisely the purview we assume as to God’s promises of our future life and glory. In speaking of these as already attained, we are speaking of what is not as if it were, because it will be (cp Rom.4:17,18); for these promises are the word of God, Who does not lie (Titus 1:2).

“Conciliate” is also a causative verb. To conciliate, is to “cause to be conciliated.” “Conciliate” is the Concordant Version translation of καταλλασσó, which by its elements says: down-change (or “in accord with [a] change”). It is used definitively in 1 Corinthians 7:11. In speaking of the wife in marriage, Paul says, “Yet if she should be separated also, let her remain unmarried or become conciliated to her husband. And a husband is not to leave his wife” (1 Cor.7:11).

Thus we learn that to be “conciliated” is to speak of the change that occurs when one who is separated from another, becomes united to the other party, placated and at peace.

*State of Heart Conciliation*

The evangel of conciliation is that God has conciliated us to Himself through the death of His Son (Rom.5:10,11). And yet, God not only conciliates us to Himself through Christ (2 Cor.5:18), but the further “word of the conciliation,” is “how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them” (2 Cor.5:18,19).

Whether as vessels of mercy or of indignation, the acts of all will be judged (cf Ecc.12:14), whether at the dais of Christ, in the various judgments of the terrestrial kingdom, or in the presence of the great white throne.

Yet considered in the aspect of their offensive effects, our offenses (paraptōnata, BESIDE-FALL-effects)—which offend God and wound His heart—these effects of our failures He reckons not even to the world. And concerning ourselves, having been conciliated to God through the death of His Son, being conciliated, we shall be saved in His life, in which evangel, we glory indeed.

Not only we ourselves, then, but even the people of the world as well, God has conciliated unto Himself. This is manifestly the position that God has granted us all, in His sight. Sadly, it is not altogether the condition even of our own hearts; much less is it the state of heart of unbelievers. So Paul entreats us, then—as those who through the death of God’s Son, have been (positionally) conciliated to Him, be becoming in practice, conciliated to Him: “We are beseeching for Christ’s sake, ‘Be [being] conciliated to God!’ For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God’s righteousness in Him” (2 Cor.5:20,21).

This is all to say: Lo! Behold the righteousness of God: Sinners made righteous before Him through the blood of His Christ; enemies conciliated to Him through the death of His Son!
God's Righteousness Revealed

**TYPE AND ANTITYPE**

And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many offenses into a just (award). (Romans 5:16)

Here also in Romans 5:16 (similarly to the selfsame rendering found both in Revelation 15:4 and 19:8), dikaiōma speaks of the “righteous-effect” which is to be awarded or bestowed as a result of the standard of God’s righteousness, in view of His grace in the work of Christ.

In Romans 5:12-19 the relationship that obtains between Adam and Christ is that of type and Antitype. An antitype is something (or someone) that is foreshadowed in its type. Adam is “a type of Him Who is about to be” (Rom.5:14), the impending One, Jesus Christ. A type is something that, be it ever so different from its antitype in other respects, nonetheless shares a particular characteristic likeness (i.e., commonality) with its antitype.

Between Adam and Christ, the likeness, or commonality, is that a single act of each one has an effect on all the rest of mankind—indeed an effect on all the rest that can only be described as one of vast proportions and of great moment. Both Adam and Christ, by each one performing a single act, does something that causes a tremendous change affecting all the rest of humanity.

What Adam does affects all mankind negatively, resulting in great adversity and suffering for all (cp Rom.5:12; Gen.2:17; 3:19). What Christ does affects all mankind positively, resulting in great benefit and blessing for all (Rom. 5:15-19; 1 Cor.15:22).

And, since it is “not as the offense, thus also the grace” (Rom.5:15), and, “Not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity” (Rom.5:16), something further becomes evident to us here:

Certainly, the benefits that we receive because of Christ's act are no less beneficial to us than the injuries are injurious that we receive because of Adam’s act. Nor is it a matter of the antitype’s good merely cancelling out the type’s evil.

It is rather that what Christ did for us is of far greater consequence for us, for actual benefit to be realized in our future life experience, than is what Adam did to us is, in actual evil imposed upon us, which is realized already in our present life experience, which has wrought such an abundance of adversity in our lives.

The grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ (in contrast to the former man, Adam, of whom Paul had just spoken), superabounds in its consequences which come upon that vast company (“the many”) of whom Paul herein speaks.

This is the same “many” (i.e., “[this] many”) of whom the apostle had just spoken, which is that most vast company of humans of which any can conceive, namely: “the many” comprising “all mankind” (cp Rom.5:12; 5:15).

“Even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned” (Rom.5:12):

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just (act) for all mankind for life’s justifying. (Romans 5:18)

In this case, our present Concordant Version rendering “just (award)” does not fit the case so well, for here in 5:18b, Paul is not speaking of the “award” which results from the act of Christ (as in 5:16 where he does just that), but is instead alluding to that righteous act of Christ itself which is in parallel to the unrighteous, offensive act of Adam (5:18a).

This dikaiōma (just-effect) calls to mind the evangel previously presented in Romans 1:17 and 3:21-24 as it is
now presented in its culminating effects on the entirety of humanity—“all mankind.”

“As it was through one offense [of Adam] for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through one just-effect for all mankind for life’s justifying.”

Here, the dikaiôma (i.e., just-effect)—which is itself the result of a right standard, God’s own right standard—refers to the death of Christ as this unparalleled act of faith is related to the righteousness of God.

God did not merely “allow” His Son to die. Instead, according to His own specific counsel, God gave Christ up to be crucified (cf Matt.26:22; Rom.8:32). He was “given up because of our offenses and was roused because of our justifying” (Rom.4:25; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:27,28; cp Isa.53:10a). “Surely, He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?” (cf Rom.8:32).

God’s righteous standards which accord with His own righteousness, make it impossible that even a single sinner should be subjected to endless punishment. Instead, they require that Christ should be made a sin offering for all, a sin offering which results in the justification and conciliation of all mankind.

In this dikaiôma of Romans 5:18, that of the death of Christ, we perceive righteousness of God as it is revealed in the evangél (Rom.1:16,17). This righteousness of God is “through Jesus Christ’s faith” (Rom.3:22); and, as it is displayed here in the zenith of its operations, we perceive it thus in its achievements on behalf of the entirety of humanity.

At the consummation (1 Cor.15:23,28), when the righteousness of God is realized in its glorious goal of making righteous and conciliating all, then, the “justifying” (i.e., the “making righteous”) of life which is “for all mankind” (Rom.5:18) will be achieved.

J.R.C.
FROM RIGHTEOUSNESS
TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Romans 5:18,19, the evangel of God, announcing that “While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes” is heightened and deepened. We now see that it truly encompasses the whole of humanity, illuminating the glory of God’s purpose for humanity as it is centered in His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord:

Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also, it is through one just act for all mankind for life’s justifying.

For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just.

Commenting on verse 18, A. E. Knoch wrote, “Christ’s one righteous act is the basis upon which all humankind will yet be freed from every effect of Adam’s offense.”

What is said of Adam and his one act of offense opens up vital aspects of the evangel concerning Jesus Christ and His one act of righteousness. The evangel itself is found in the latter halves of verses 18 and 19. Here all is sourced in the righteousness of God, all is channeled through one righteous act of Christ. His act of faith-obedience in dying for sinners, and all is consummated in righteousness, both as to the entire human race and as to life itself.

THREE SIGNIFICANT WORDS

In this respect, three Greek words used by Paul in Romans 5:18,19 call for special attention. The first is *dikaio¯ma* in verse 18, which is translated “just award” in the CV, but rendered “just act” above. The second is *dikaio¯sis* (also in verse 18), translated by the word “justifying.” The third is *dikaion*, appearing at the end of verse 19 and rendered “just.”

They belong to that important group of words (so central to Paul’s presentation of the evangel in Romans) which are built on the root *dik-* meaning *just or righteous.* It is in the evangel of God concerning His Son that God’s righteousness (*dikaiosunê*) is being revealed (Rom.1:17), now being made manifest through Jesus Christ’s faith (3:21,22). We are justified (*dikaionmenoi*) gratuitously in God’s grace through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24). Thus God is put on display as just (*dikaion*) and the Justifier (*dikaioumena*) of sinners as they are brought under the benefits of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26).

The evangel reveals the righteousness of God in the death of Christ for sinners, securing the righteousness of justification, which will ultimately embrace all mankind. The message takes us from righteousness to righteousness.

In Romans 5:18 the word *dikaio¯ma* points to God’s righteousness lying behind the righteous act of Christ in His death for sinners. There also the word *dikaio¯sis* speaks of the righteous achievement of this work of righteousness for all mankind as it relates to life. Then in verse 19 the term *dikaion* describes the righteous state that will ultimately be enjoyed by the many individuals who have been so adversely affected by the disobedience of Adam.

It is all sourced in the righteousness of God. It is all channeled through the righteous work of Jesus Christ. It all culminates in a life and state of glorious righteousness.

EFFECTS OF GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Greek word, *dikaiôma*, is defined in the KEYWORD CONCORDANCE as “the result of a right standard” (p.166).

The underlying sense of the word is an effect resulting from a right standard, that is, the effect of true and uncompromised righteousness. Such an effect, whether a statute or requirement of law, or the awarding of justification, or the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ, is necessarily just.

In Scripture, *dikaiôma* always refers to a righteous thing, determined by the context, resulting from the operation of God’s innate standard of righteousness. The *dikaiôma* of Romans 1:32, for example, is the effect of God’s right standard for judging those who commit the wicked acts listed in verses 29-31. The just statute declaring that those committing such things are deserving of death results from God’s right standard, His standard of what is right in view of human unrighteousness apart from the achievements of the cross.

The *dikaiôma* of Romans 5:16, however, is the effect of God’s standard of righteousness in view of the death of His Son for sinners. It is the just award of justification, arising from God’s righteousness in light of the blood of Christ (Rom.5:9). Because of the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners, God is now manifested as just in justifying sinners (Rom.3:21-26). The essence of God’s inherent righteousness is of the highest standard; it is absolutely without flaw. There can be no cover-up and no room for questioning its results.

Justification is just! It is not simply a pronouncement based on sovereign authority, but is an actual achievement of God in sparing not His own Son but giving Him up for us all. God’s righteousness saturates this achievement as fully as His power and wisdom (cf 1 Cor.1:18-25) and love (cf Rom.5:6-8; 8:33-39). The word *dikaiôma* in Romans...
5:16 speaks of the just award of justification as the righteous effect of God’s standard of righteousness in view of the death of Christ.

But what is the dikaiōma of Romans 5:18?

THROUGH ONE JUST-EFFECT

We have noted the striking parallel between the phrases “through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom” in Romans 5:11, and “through the One, Jesus Christ” in verse 17. The obtaining of the conciliation and the reigning in life for those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness are channeled through Jesus Christ. These are the words of good news which immediately lead the way to the “Therefore” of verse 12 and the “Consequently” of 18. Paul is centering our attention on the evangel as it concerns God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. He continues to do this with the phrase “through one dikaiōma,” in verse 18, and “through the obedience of the One” in verse 19. Whatever the dikaiōma is, it is associated intimately with Christ.

It may be, as reflected by the current CV rendering, that Paul used the word dikaiōma in Romans 5:18 with the same application as in verse 16. Through the one righteous award of justification for all mankind all will enjoy life’s justifying. Such a thought necessarily involves the fact that Christ died for sinners. But in the context of Romans 5:18, it seems more likely that Paul has the righteous act of Christ in dying for sinners directly in view. Through the one righteous act of Christ’s death for all mankind all will enjoy life’s justifying.

Hence, in this view the just-effect of Romans 5:18 is the effect of God’s standard of righteousness upon Christ Himself in His death for us while we remain wretched sinners and at enmity to God. It is Christ's faithful obedience in response to the requirements of God’s righteousness. Much as the phrase, “Jesus Christ’s faith” (Rom.3:22), speaks of our Lord’s reliance on God, and His faithful obedience to the fearful task set before Him, in a similar way the word dikaiōma in Romans 5:18 speaks of Christ’s death as the outworking of God’s righteousness in Him.

The one offense was the effect of Adam’s “beside-fall.” The one dikaiōma was the effect of God's righteousness upon Christ. His death for sinners was the result of God's standard of righteousness operating in Him.

FOR ALL MANKIND

This one astounding act of righteousness in which the One, Jesus Christ, responded fully and faithfully to the standard of God’s perfect righteousness, under the most horrendous of circumstances, is for all mankind. What Jesus Christ did in this one particular act of faith had all mankind in view and ultimately brings the benefit of “life’s justifying” to all. Otherwise it would not manifest the glory and purity of God’s righteousness. The idea of everlasting torment or eternal annihilation of some sinners does not, in any way, display the essence of God’s righteousness.

GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The revelation of the righteousness of God is fundamental and primary to the evangel. It is not something to be assumed and then kept out of view while we decide what the evangel has to be saying. We must see it in the evangel, all along the way, in what was done and what was achieved.

We also must see God’s righteousness as it is revealed in God’s achievement through the obedience of Christ alone, apart from our efforts. A message placing requirements on us to do what is impossible for us to do cannot reveal the righteousness of God. Even more so, a mes-
sage that tries to incorporate concessions to human limitations, such as salvation for those who do the best they can as faithfully as they can, cannot make God's perfect righteousness known, and cannot lead to the justification of life which He has in view. He will not justify anyone on a basis which is not absolutely right.

The evangel is a message of God's grace. Justification is achieved apart from human works of law, solely by means of the faith of Jesus Christ, His obedience to the death of the cross. In not sparing His own Son, but giving Him up for us all, God achieves the righteous justification of all sinners and offenders and transgressors, and the conciliation and reconciliation of every enemy, and the justifying of life itself with all its sorrows and failures. The testimony will not be made manifest all at once, but in its own eras as God has determined (cf 1 Tim.2:6). But it is here in the evangel of God concerning His Son that we are to become acquainted with the fullness of God's righteousness, and here alone.

FOR LIFE'S JUSTIFYING

In Romans 5:8 Paul brings the evangel to us in plain and simple terms: “Christ died for our sakes.” The “just act” of Romans 5:18 corresponds to the words “Christ died.” The words “life's justifying” correspond to the phrase, “for our sakes.”

But what does it mean that the one just act of Christ in dying for our sakes was for “life's justifying”?

The Greek word dikaios is a noun formed from the verb justify (dikaiō). Most English translations use the word “justification” to represent this Greek word. But the CV uses “justifying” in order to bring out the sense of an act in progress which the -sis ending suggests. It is followed by the Greek word for “life” which is in the genitive case, so that a literal translation would be “justifica-

Our Justifying and Life's Justifying

tion of life” (as in the AV), or “justifying of life.” Another way to express this construction where a noun is followed by another noun in the genitive case would be “life's justification,” or as given in the CV, “life's justifying.”

But the idea of life being justified is so foreign to traditional theology that it is hardly ever considered in commentaries and expositions on this passage. Consequently, even where the translation, “justification of life,” is accepted the words are explained as meaning “justification leading to life,” or sometimes, “justification and life,” claiming an idiomatic use of the genitive case.

This is maintained despite the fact that the word dikaios appears only one other time in Scripture and that but a short way back in Romans where the ordinary sense is accepted. In chapter 4, verse 25, it is joined by the pronoun “us” in the genitive case, literally, “justifying of us,” or “our justifying” (the AV reading is “our justification”). There is no attempt, in translation or exposition, to claim an idiomatic use of the genitive here. The common sense is the obvious meaning.

Let us pause and give serious consideration to the possibility that Paul uses the phrase, “life’s justifying,” in the same way he uses the phrase, “our justifying,” in Romans 4:25. In both cases the word dikaios appears in direct connection with the evangel which says, “Christ died for our sins.” He was given up because of our offenses. He was roused because of our justifying (that is, He was roused because our justifying had occurred in His death, the shedding of His blood). So also in our passage the evangel that Christ died for our sakes is declared in these words: It is through the one just act of Christ's death for all mankind, that life's justifying is achieved.

What Christ accomplished in dying for our sakes was manifold. In the present context alone we learn we are justified in His blood (Rom.5:9); we are conciliated to God.
through His death (Rom.5:10); we shall be constituted just through His obedience (Rom.5:19). Now we are told that all mankind will enjoy life's justifying because of that one just act of Jesus Christ in carrying out the requirements of God's righteousness.

GOD GIVES US LIFE

Once again Paul is taking us back to Genesis, this time to the words of Genesis 2:7 where we read that “Yahweh Elohim formed the human out of soil from the ground, and He blew into his nostrils the breath of life; and the human became a living soul” (Gen.2:7).

Yet through this one man sin came into the world, and through sin came death as an operation of dying leading downward to the state of death (cf Gen.2:17), and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned (Rom.5:12). We were made to be living. Yet we came to be dying. The human was given life but soon came under the tyrannical reign of death.

Earlier in Romans Paul spent the equivalent of three chapters describing the terrible condition of humanity because of its irreverence and unrighteousness (Rom.1:18-3:21). Apart from what Christ did for our sakes, we are not righteous, and we are deserving of death (Rom.1:32). What is sorely needed is that we be made righteous, and this means also that life itself be made righteous.

What do the facts of Romans 1:18-3:20 and Romans 5:12-14 say about God and about His righteousness? God “gives to all life and breath and all” (Acts 17:25), and yet “Not one is righteous” (Rom.3:10). Death reigns and all sin.

Accordingly, the Assembler wrote about life as he experienced its vanity (its transitoriness): “And I hated life, For to me the work was evil that was done under the sun, For the whole is vanity and a grazing on wind” (Ecc.2:17). So also the psalmist exclaimed to Yahweh: “For what futility have You created all the sons of humanity?” (Psa.89:47).

GOD GIVES US LIFE

Here again the issue is the righteousness of God.

Can God's provision of life to human beings as it has developed because of Adam’s one offense ever be fully justified?

Yes it can. Yes it must become so. Yes it will be so and fully experienced by all mankind. The evil, the vanity, the futility, all serve to the realization and appreciation of the goodness and wisdom and righteousness and love of God.

AN ENRICHED LIFE

This will be enjoyed in that justified life which comes through the just act of Jesus Christ. Because of His death we will live apart from sin and death, but not only this, but our life then will possess a vitality and significance that would be impossible without the experience of evil of the present transitory life. We will be constituted righteous, as verse 19 assures us. But also God's gift of life and its ruin and apparent futility as we know it now will be justified because of the way in which the vivified life in Christ is enriched by the sorrows, struggles and twisted thinking and action of the present life. It will not only be that we will be made righteous, but then also we will enjoy full realization of the goodness and righteousness of God.

Life as it has become because of Adam's one act of offense stands in contrast to the life which will become because of Christ's particular act of righteousness. The experience of irreverence and unrighteousness will open up the joyous appreciation of life justified. And the experience of infirmity, irreverence, sin and enmity which press down on us in this life, will effectively and exultantly open up the glory of the peace and the grace of access to God which will reign in life justified.

The Creator of life is the Justifier of life. He does this through that one astounding just act of Jesus Christ in dying for our sins.
CONSTITUTED JUST

Regarding verse 19, A. E. Knoch wrote, “Now the contrast is not between two acts, but between two single human beings, Adam and Christ. One constitutes many sinners, and the Other constitutes many just.”

To this we might add that while verse 18 speaks of all mankind as a unit, verse 19 speaks of the many individuals composing the human race. Verse 18 tells of two single acts and the way in which they affect the entirety of humanity. Verse 19 tells of two single individuals, Adam and Christ, and of the way they affect Cain and Abel and Seth and Noah and Abraham and Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau and Job and Ruth and Boaz and Saul and David and Absalom and Solomon and Josiah and his sons and Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel and Mary and Joseph and Peter and Judas and Paul and you and me and all the other billions of people who compose the multitudinous whole of mankind.

There is no pretense in this achievement of God channelled through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, our Lord. There are no limitations imposed because of human sin and offense and undeservedness. When Christ died all died (2 Cor.5:14). It is not because of us or anything we have done. It is because of Christ’s obedience. Even as Adam’s disobedience made us sinners, so also Christ’s obedience makes us just, that is, righteous, in accord with God’s timing (cp 1 Cor.15:23).

To be constituted just—this achievement of God in giving up His Son for our sakes, was anticipated in Romans 1:16,17. It prepares us for Paul’s exposition of the power of the evangel of God’s grace which follows in Romans 5:20,21 and chapter 6. We will look at these happy matters in more detail in our next article.

D.H.H.

THE HUMAN SOUL

Why? What? Where? Whither? Such are the questions which arise when we consider the human soul and its place in God’s purpose. Strange to say, the usual answers are shrouded in obscurity. Who can tell us why man has a soul? Who knows what it is? And who can tell us where it is and whither it goes at death? Incredible as it may seem, the popular translation of the Bible is most misleading, and will only confuse us if we seek light from it on this theme. The traditions of men had such a strong hold on the translators that they deliberately altered or ignored the word soul in the key passages. As a result it is commonly held that animals have no souls, instead of being like man in this respect. And none seem able to locate the soul, though it is in their very blood. Tradition teaches that, at death, the soul of the unbeliever goes to hell. The Bible shows that the spirit returns to God Who gave it (Ecc.12:7). Yet orthodoxy cannot define the difference! If the soul-spirit goes to both places at the same time, the terms heaven and hell must also mean the same!

The reader of the Authorized Version is hoodwinked as to the close relationship of the animals to man, by its discordant rendering of the word soul in its account of creation (Gen.1:20,21,24,30). Three times it is translated creature, although it is entirely distinct from the word rendered create which is found in the first verse. Once it is omitted. Although soul is used these four times of animals in the Hebrew, it is not rendered soul until it is used of man. The translators were evidently orthodox, and did not believe that animals are souls. Indeed, to this day pop-
Man has Sensation, or Soul

ular theology teaches that the great distinction between the animals and man lies in this, that man has an “immortal soul” and the animal has none. This flatly contradicts the very first page of God’s revelation. These discordant renderings have poisoned the well of truth as to the relation of man to the lower creatures.

These perversions are so serious that we will set them forth at length, along with a concordant rendering. In Genesis 1:20 the Authorized Version reads: “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life.” It should read: “Let the waters swarm with the swarming thing, the living soul.” Here creature is put for soul. This is partially true, for all souls are created by God. But there is nothing in the Hebrew text or its Greek translation to indicate this thought. It is injected and the true idea is concealed.

The second occurrence (Gen.1:21) reads somewhat like the first: “And God created . . . every living creature that moveth.” This should be: every moving, living soul. These occurrences show that, in contrast to plants, which also have life, souls may move about.

The third time soul is again rendered creature (Gen. 1:24): “Let the earth bring forth the living creature . . . .”

The fourth occurrence reads (1:30): “And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life . . . .” This is not the intended thought. The last clause should read: in which there is a living soul. Plants have life. The animals on the land and air have more than that. They have sensation, and they alone can crawl and creep and fly. Only they are souls. Living plants are not included.

Perhaps we should warn our readers that the margins of some Bibles have added to the confusion by indicating that soul has been used for life (rather than creature) in some of these passages. This obscures the important fact that animals are not merely called souls, but living souls, in all four occurrences, the same phrase as is used of man.

When man is formed (Gen.2:7)—the fifth occurrence of the word nephesh—the Authorized Version does not call him a creature, though he certainly was, nor does it omit the word soul. For the first time they translate correctly, and call him a living soul. Alas, in such a case the correct rendering itself is misleading, because it is not concordant. Instead of informing us that man became the same as the animals previously created, it tells us that he is something different. They were merely creatures, while Adam became a soul! This example alone should convince all that discordant renderings are dangerous. They spoil even those translations which are correct in themselves!

Why was man given a soul? Why can he sense the world about him and feel pain and pleasure? This function is essential to the part he plays in more ways than one. Only by an actual experience of good and evil can he be prepared for his destined duties. During the eons the experience of evil is necessary to bring man down to a realization of his absolute dependence on God for happiness, and the need of utter subjection for his welfare. Until mankind reaches this place at the consummation, the race is not fitted to fulfil its functions. Only the saints, as a kind of firstfruits, have taken their place, for, even now, the sovereignties and authorities among the celestials learn of the multifarious wisdom of God through the ecclesia (Eph.3:10). Only Christ Himself, the great Firstfruit, has entered into the glory.

But man was not made merely to enjoy himself. Indeed, he learns by sad experience that selfishness is an insuperable barrier to true happiness. Israel has sought its own welfare hitherto, when its real satisfaction lies in the blessing of the other nations. In seeking wealth and power and glory for itself it has forfeited pleasure for its own soul. So
with mankind as a whole. Its destiny is to bring blessing to
the rest of creation, and apart from this it will fail to find
the felicity which it craves. We have been given a soul, not
merely to be able to experience the bliss of our own bless-
ings, but to bring such bliss to the balance of God’s crea-
tures. That, indeed, is the greatest good that God has given
us. It is blessed to give rather than to get.

Man’s particular province on earth is the animal creation.
To equip him for his place above them he is not only made
in the image and likeness of God, but very closely resem-
bles the creatures over whom he rules. Both have bodies
from the soil and breathe the air of the atmosphere, and
these are assimilated by means of the blood. As a result,
they have consciousness and sensation, or a soul. Man and
the animals have this in common, that they both are living
souls. Man can mediate between God and the animals, for
he has points of contact with both.

How dreadful it would be for the animals if men had no
souls as they themselves do! Even as it is, we have far too
little feeling for these creatures who are subject to us. The
mere fact that we have societies for the prevention of cru-
elty to animals shows how callous we are, even when we
ourselves share in the suffering that they endure. Man’s
inhumanity to man is, perhaps, just as bad. There is no
question, however, that animals owe much to the fact
that their human masters have souls like theirs, and are taught
by their own experience how terrible suffering can be.

What the soul is, we have set forth fully elsewhere, but
a fresh study from another standpoint may be helpful. Soul
is physical sensation, not spiritual life, for which it is usually
mistaken. A soulish man likes the pleasures produced by
eating and drinking and all other agreeable and delightful
sensations, rather than the intangible experiences of the
spirit. These do not appeal to him. But the mere fact of
having a soul does not imply the lack of spirituality. Man

has both, a spirit and a soul, that is, he has life and sen-
sation. Yet the body is strongly inclined to follow its feel-
ings. It is soulish at present. But the tyranny of the soul is
a temporary condition, due to man’s mortality. Had Adam
been created immortal, so that he could not die, the life-
giving spirit would have so dominated his actions that he
would not have sinned. Thus will it be with all mankind,
when they are vivified.

**THE SOUL A COMBINATION, NOT AN ADDITION**

Is the soul **material** or **immaterial**? Is man a soul, or **has**
he a soul? All such questions show that the basic facts con-
cerning the soul have never been grasped. The soul can-
ot be classified in this way. We might as well ask, Is the
body a solid or water? Is a man anybody or **has** he a body?
(The body, by the way, was not made of **dust**, but of **soil**,
the very same as that which grows our food. Not much will
grow without moisture.) The soul also is the product of a
combination. Much of the language used of it is figu-
rative. The body and the spirit are distinct entities that may
exist apart from each other. Not so the soul. It is only the
effect of their union. It has no existence apart from their
combination. It is often spoken of as if it were a tangible
thing, but that is due to the necessities of language. Lit-
erally, at death, the soul ceases to exist, because body and
spirit separate. The same thought is presented in a differ-
ent way when the soul is said to go to the imperceptible,
the unseen. Death ends all perception, all sensation. This
is expressed figuratively when the soul is sent to hades, the
imperceptible, the unseen.

**Has** man a soul, or is he a soul? A great deal of use-
less argument has failed to settle this problem, because
everything is taken literally, and figures of speech are not
understood. That man has a soul is evident from the oft
repeated “**my soul**.” That man is not **literally** a soul, with-
a body or spirit, is also evident, for these are the two elements producing a soul, and the latter is only the phenomenon resulting from their union. Besides, Scripture says not only that man became a living soul (Gen.2:7), but also insists that man is soil (AV, dust). He could not possibly be both at the same time. It is the figure of near association. That part of man is put for the whole which is uppermost in the context. In view of life, man is a soul. In view of death, man is soil. Since the human body now is soulish and soilish (1 Cor.15:44-49), man is hardly called a spirit, for that is subordinate. But when we receive our spiritual bodies, there is no reason why we should not be called spirits, in a figure, for spirit will be supreme. But there would be the danger of this word being taken literally, as though we had no bodies or souls.

To save ourselves the labor of investigating the vast field of theology, we will consider the very latest and best that we can find in contemporary theology as to the soul. The following quotation is taken from Bibliotheca Sacra, volume 101, page 18:

“The mystery of life is baffling and never more so than when an analysis of the immaterial part of man is undertaken. The whole reality of being is largely due to that in a living person which actuates the body, which sustains a conscious relation to all things, and without which the body is not only dead, but immediately subject to decay; but as long as that reality remains in the body, life continues, the body is preserved, and its structure renewed. It is that which thinks, which feels, which reasons, which wills. It is that enigmatic actuality which comprehends, yet itself cannot be comprehended.”

This quotation mixes soul and spirit together. In order to help in distinguishing them, we have put what refers to soul in small capitals, and what has to do with spirit in italics. The word “mystery” is significant. The real “mysteries” of Scripture are merely secrets. Here, however, theology acknowledges that the “immaterial” part of man is an obscure, incomprehensible problem. To begin with, the division of man into “material” and “immaterial” parts, though it seems so fundamentally sound and logical, puts the whole matter on an unscriptural and misleading basis. It implies that man is composed of two utterly separate entities, which cannot unite to form a combination. It would be far more logical, since mankind is a unit, to speak of three divisions: the material, the immaterial, and their resultant, which would partake of both, yet may be quite different from either. This would be the soul.

But why introduce unsound terminology into the subject? “Mysteries” cannot be solved by such means. This one will vanish if we confine ourselves to sound words, used by God Himself, Who knows all about it. The soul must not be classified with the spirit, even if it seems to be immaterial, any more than we should classify an electric light in the same category as electric power. Soul, like light, is an effect which requires both a material and an immaterial cause, and cannot well be ranged under either category. As a filament plus current makes light, so the soil of the body, given life by the spirit, produces sensation or soul.

In the paragraph we have quoted, it will be seen that the life that actuates the body, so that it is dead and decays without it, is the spirit. But the human spirit is not conscious, and does not literally feel anything. That is due to the action of the spirit on the soil. It is the soul. The mystery is practically solved if we keep the spirit distinct from the effects it produces upon the body, that is, sensation. In a later paragraph we are assured that “the distinction between soul and spirit is as incomprehensible as life itself, and the efforts of men to frame definitions must always be unsatisfactory.” The real reason why this seems
Mankind is Soil and Spirit

so is the injection of false premises and futile reasoning, and a departure from sound words.

It may help us to see why another important matter cannot be solved by theology, when it fails to distinguish the soul from the spirit, and clings to the division into “material” and “immaterial.” Up to this point it would seem clear that man is composed of only these two parts, but now it seems that there are three!

“A question arises at this point which has engaged and divided theologians in all generations, namely, is man a dichotomous being—two parts, material and immaterial with the supposition that soul and spirit are the same—or is he trichotomous body, soul, and spirit? It would be readily conceded by all that, under any consideration, there is not the same breadth of distinction observable between soul and spirit; yet these terms are used synonymously. Thus the controversy is between those who are impressed with the distinctions and those who are impressed with the similarities. It would be well to recognize that, when so required, the Bible assigns to those two terms a distinctive meaning and that when no specific distinction is in view the Bible uses them as interchangeable. In other words, the Bible supports both dichotomy and trichotomy.”

What a puzzling book it must be that is so inconsistent! But we may rest assured that there is no clash of this kind in the Scriptures. It needs only a single reading of the account of man’s creation to see that man is made of two elements, and, then, became a third thing. The two and three do not clash. Soil and spirit are two. They alone, without any addition, compose man. The soul is not an addition, a third element. It is the result of the union of soil and spirit. Man is not made of two parts because soul and spirit are the same, but because the soul was not needed to make man, being the effect of the union of the body with the spirit. It

The Soul is their Product

is therefore misleading to speak of the soul as “immaterial,” for there can be no soul without the “material.” And it is just as wrong to speak of it as “material,” for the spirit is essential to its existence.

Soul and spirit are never used synonymously in the Scriptures. They are in theology and in popular usage. In fact, soul has almost usurped the place of spirit in religious circles. Why should there be the same breadth of distinction between soul and body, and soul and spirit, as there is between spirit and body, when soul is the effect of the spirit on the body? But that there is a great gulf between soul and spirit ought to be evident from the Scriptures, when the Bible translates soulish by sensual, which may be the opposite of spiritual. Soul and spirit are never interchangeable. The fact that our translators have rendered soul by life so often, has led to this deplorable confusion, and now supports it. It is practically impossible for anyone using such a discordant version to come to any clear understanding of his own constitution! He has a soul, yet doesn’t know what it is!

WHERE THE SOUL IS

Where is the soul? Here we have a good illustration of the vast amount of confusion a single discordant mistranslation can make. Theology is permeated with the mistaken notion that the life is in the blood! It suffers from lack of clearness that it is the soul which is in the blood. As a consequence, it has practically lost the truth as to the soul. It labors and heaves with efforts to show that the soul is different from the spirit, all the while giving it the function of spirit, which is to impart life.

The blood itself is a combination, like the soul. It is composed of particles assimilated from food derived from the soil, and of gases derived from the breath taken from the air. A human being, as at present constituted, will die if the
blood is drained from his veins. But he will also die from other causes, when he has plenty of blood. If the blood is temporarily withdrawn from a part of the body, that part is not dead, the spirit does not leave, but it is unconscious, because the soul leaves with the blood. There is no sensation in a limb from which the blood has been drained. Nature agrees with revelation that the soul is in the blood, and is dependent on the presence of the blood, not in the whole body, but in small sections of it.

Physiology, like theology, is all at sea as to the soul, although the evidence is plentiful on every side that sensation is in the blood. We were taught, and I think it is still the teaching of “science,” so-called, that all sensation is in the nerves. There is doubtless a modicum of truth in this, for they probably connect members of the body with the brain, but much of this is quite unconscious. Many experiences show that, even when the nerves are whole, there is no sensation where there is no blood. Nature confirms revelation in this matter. Both agree that the removal of blood from a member of the body destroys sensation, not life, even if this would eventually follow.

A newspaper correspondent was seriously wounded while at the front line of the war, in Italy. Later, when recounting his experience, he reported that the most remarkable part of all was the fact that he did not suffer much, although his wounds were very bad and bloody. He inquired of others and found it so in all cases where much blood was lost. The doctor in charge of the hospital assured him that the most horribly mangled often suffered the least. He did not seem to understand why this is so, but came near guessing the truth that those who lost the most blood suffered the least.

The opposite is true of internal injuries. Not long since a friend fell down stairs and shattered a shoulder and a hip. There was no loss of blood, but every indication of the most excruciating pain. The suffering was so intense that the realization of it almost made me ill and helpless. It confirmed my finding in the Scriptures, and I almost wished that some blood had been lost, or that it could be drained from those limbs which had been injured, or displaced by some other fluid temporarily. I was told many years ago, that an extractor of teeth injected water in the gums, and pulled teeth without pain.

The same truth comes out in an entirely different way in the experience of aviators. When “pulling out” of a swift dive, the blood, not being attached to the flesh, continues to go down when the body is forced to stop its descent. It leaves the upper part of the body, and, as a consequence, the flier becomes unconscious. There is a dangerous “blackout,” so long as the heart is not able to pump the blood back to the head. From this we see that, not merely sensation, but consciousness, which consists in the exercise of the perceptive faculties, sight, hearing, smell, and taste, are absent when there is no blood in the eyes and ears and mouth and nose. So to speak they “go to sleep,” along with the mental functions when blood leaves the brain.

God’s law mercifully recognizes this fact. It demanded that, in killing an animal, the blood must be drained as quickly as possible (Lev.17:13). This is a great relief to those who imagine that the sea of blood which was shed on Jewish altars represented untold suffering and anguish. The exact contrary is the fact. These animals, had they lived until death by natural causes had overtaken them, would undoubtedly have had their share of suffering, as all animals do, especially in disease or old age. All this was spared them when they were killed in such a way as to drain the blood quickly from their veins. Where the blood flowed freely there was no pain. The same is true of the so-called “kosher” way of killing, used by the Jews today. It ought to be practiced by all, as the most humane of all methods of slaughtering animals.
Our Lord’s resurrection body is the crowning demonstration that life is not in the blood. Were blood essential, it certainly would have been restored to Him in resurrection. But all the evidence seems to insist that His blood was shed, not only by the wounds of crucifixion, but by the spear thrust into His side (John 19:34). This was in contrast to the fate of the others who were crucified with Him, whose bones were broken. Like the sin offerings of old, no bone of Him was crushed. This corresponds with His own words to His disciples when they thought that He was a spirit. He did not claim that He was flesh and blood, but flesh and bones. It seems certain that His resurrection body had no blood, yet it was vital with life far beyond what He had before, for He became immortal. Surely if the life were in the blood, the loss of all the blood would not lead to life everlasting!

Once we are aware why we have a soul, and what it is, and where it resides, there is little difficulty in determining whither it goes at death. If it is the effect of a combination, and this combination is dissolved, then the effect disappears, just as the light vanishes when we cut off the current from the filament in an electric bulb. Let us not be misled by the figurative language of the Scriptures, and transform what the Greek calls the imperceptible into a “hell” with its connotations of fire, and devils and despair.

Its Hebrew name, sheol, has practically the same significance, for it is only a form of the stem which means ask. It is the place of which nothing can be known. Both saints and sinners go there, but why should we paint it in lurid colors, either good or bad, when it cannot be perceived or known?

The soul is the sensation consequent on the combination of spirit with an organic body. At present it is found in the blood. In death the soul vanishes into the unseen.

A. E. Knoch
—New Publications—

from the pen of A. E. Knoch

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EDITORIAL

The order of the articles in this issue of our magazine is fairly well backwards in relation to that of Paul’s letters. We begin with a meditation on Paul’s prison epistles (“Christ and Paul”) and end with notes on Romans 5:19 (“Through the Obedience of the One”). In between are questions and answers regarding the place of law and grace in Paul’s ministry (“Honor your Father and Mother” and “Grace and the Ration of Sin”); plus a clarifying study of the present constitution and future mission of mankind (“The Soul not Immortal”). Yet the so-called “canonical order” of Paul’s epistles, which if not inspired on the same level as the writings themselves, is certainly appropriate, begins with Romans, leading forward to the maturity of revelation in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, before concluding with the epistles of expectation and Paul’s personal letters focused on the character and continuance of the faith.

In former years this magazine concentrated more, in accord with its name, on the untraceable riches of Christ (Eph.3:8, CV). Brother Mealand’s meditation (first published in 1945) is especially representative of this emphasis. Although the other three studies give greater attention to the foundational themes of soul and flesh, law and grace, justification and conciliation, most thoroughly covered in Paul’s earlier epistles, these are fundamental for our appreciation of our celestial expectation and the transcendent grace unfolded in the later writings.

We need both. We need to know and appreciate “the zenith of grace” which “was reached in the grand unfoldings of the prison epistles” (p.51), while never forgetting
the fundamental revelations of God’s righteousness and love through the obedience of His Son, Jesus Christ. For indeed Ephesians takes up the themes of Romans 3:21-5:21, and expands on them, in its opening references to God’s choice of us in Christ, “we to be holy and flawless in His sight, in love designating us beforehand for the place of a son” (Eph. 1:4,5). So also Romans 3:24 and 5:8 lie behind the words of Ephesians 1:7 concerning the deliverance through Christ’s blood. And Romans 5 as a whole provides the basis of Ephesians 2:8, in which we read: “For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God’s approach present.” Again, we see that Ephesians 3:17 points back to the glorious unfoldings of God’s love described in Romans 5:5-8 and brought into our lives in Romans 8:35-39, in which we are rooted and grounded.

Brother Knoch once wrote, “Sinner, would you know how to be just before God? Read Romans!” Saint, would you be at perfect peace with God? Read Romans!” Then in his introduction to Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians he observed, “Paul’s Perfection epistles are based upon his Preparatory epistles to the Thessalonians, the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Galatians. They are addressed to those who had received the truth taught in his earlier ministries . . . .”

We would be like Timothy, believers who “fully follow” Paul in his teaching, motive, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings” (2 Tim.3:10,11). This certainly means retaining in heart and walk the evangel Paul brought to us, which we accepted, and through which we are being saved (1 Cor.15:1,2), as well as praying for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the realization of God, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing among the celestials, in Christ (Eph.1:3,15-17). D.H.H.

1. Concordant Commentary, pages 229 and 287.
CHRIST AND PAUL

Why is it that today there is no impelling conception of the risen Christ and, through Him, of a gracious, understanding God and Father? And is it not true to say, that because of this lack, and understatement of the evangel, people are kept at a great remove from the glorious God they should intimately know?

From long years of experience and observation, we are inclined to think one reason lies in the fact that Paul’s evangel and heralding of truth to the nations has been so tragically unheeded. Enrichment of life, and a rare illumination of mind in the things of God, always attended his ministry, and wherever a recovery of the precious truth he enunciated has been grasped, there has been vital blessing. It has not, however, been clearly seen that his teaching is progressive, ever mounting upwards and leading, as it were, to a pinnacle of grace and glory.

THE PRISON EPISTLES

Now, it is surely true to say that the zenith of grace was reached in the grand unfoldings of the prison epistles. Therefore it is for us in these later days to base our position upon them. Since within them we have Paul’s latest and quite unique revelation from the ascended Christ Himself, should we not rest our constructive thinking on such a great announcement?

Paul alone gives us the truth of the body of Christ as a designation of those who, hearing him and others with him, have steadfastly stood by his teaching. But this is not
all. When the flood tide of grace came, and the apostle to the nations was entrusted with “the administration of the grace of God,” so specially given to him, that body became a joint body, an altogether new and rare organism. And very simply and beautifully is it set forth.

“In spirit the nations are to be joint enjoyers of an allotment, and a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which I became the dispenser, in accord with the gratuity of the grace of God, which is granted to me in accord with His powerful operation” (Eph.3:6,7). But so short a quotation may fail to bring home to heart and mind the sublime import of the apostle’s message. It calls for the whole chapter and paragraphs of the next. For there is Paul’s fervent prayer and marvelous doxology, followed by an exhortation which surely stands alone for spiritual breadth and grandeur.

TRANSCENDENT REVELATIONS

Indeed, so transcendent a statement should in itself give settlement of belief, and, in harmony with the Philippian and Colossian letters, establish the standing and outlook of all believers. It is one of vivid clearness. Paul tells us there is “one body and one spirit, according as you were called also with one expectation of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph.4:4-6).

Surely, in this sevenfold summary of belief, we have a spiritual program that should be satisfying to all believers in Christ Jesus. It is a simple yet comprehensive declaration, which, had it been faithfully adhered to, would have meant volumes of blessing to the assemblies of God’s people. But when its clarity is marred by addition or subtraction of words, its beauty and beneficence are gone. We should remember that whatever preceded the teaching Paul unfolds in his rare trio of prison epistles, it is absorbed and carried forward to a veritable zenith of grace. We do not read such language elsewhere, the phraseology of which is so fitting to this wondrous era of grace.

Maybe its purely celestial character is not seen as completing what hitherto was but fragmentary. In his presentation of the Christ of God, Paul is unique as the interpreter of the risen Christ “Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all” (Eph.1:22,23). Again, who but Paul so writes of Christ as the One through Whom God purposes to reconcile the universe to Himself (Col.1:20)?

A TENDENCY TOWARD CONFUSION

When we note the language which so characterizes Ephesians do we not feel that the last word has been written with regard to the present outlook and future destiny of the body of Christ? The tendency to merge teaching which should be kept apart, causes confusion of mind and detracts from the full enjoyment of the grace and truth for this time present.

Take, for instance, the subject of baptism. John’s baptism by water was distinctly for the time being. Note the words of Christ Himself to John. “By your leave, at present, for thus it is becoming for us to fulfill all righteousness” (Matt.3:15).

It was truth just for the time, a test of faith at that particular era, and truth at that moment. It was also fitting that the King should thus come into line with the proclamation of the kingdom. Therefore, His disciples continued to administer the rite in accord with the evangel they preached. When, however, the kingdom proclamation met with final rejection at Rome, the practice of baptism appears to cease. And Paul emphatically declares that baptism is not included in his own special testimony (1 Cor.1:17). Therefore, the “one baptism” mentioned in
Ephesians is evidently in spirit, for everything in that unity is spiritual.

We may think of other things which obtained just for the time, but when we enter upon our celestial citizenship, things made with hands have little appeal. And the apostle Paul was brought into the light and liberty of this realm that he might pass on to others the illumination and enrichment he himself received.

PAUL’S APOSTLESHIP

It is well, too, to bear in mind the distinctiveness of Paul’s commission. It so stands by itself. Some of its wording sets the apostle quite apart as a pioneer and pathfinder in the realm of grace. From the glory above the brightness of the sun came a voice in utterance of these expressive words: “I was seen by you for this, to fix upon you before for a deputy and a witness both of what you have perceived and that in which I will be seen by you, extricating you from the people and from the nations, to whom I am commissioning you” (Acts 26:16,17).

Now, the words purposely italicized above, surely prepare our hearts and minds for such a revelation as Paul unfolds in Ephesians. And that revelation discloses the transformation that was to affect the body of Christ. It was to become a joint-body. This was a new and unparalleled thing, a perfect equality of membership of the body of Christ unheard of before. Neither Peter, nor the other apostles present with Christ in His earthly ministry, mention anything like it. Paul’s heralding of the evangel alone led to it as part of his stewardship to the nations.

There is nothing in nature, or in aught “made with hands” to compare with its divine beauty. Its grandeur is, that it is “in spirit.” Why, then, seek to make a blend of Paul with Peter, or even with John? It is no disparagement to the other writers, to emphasize the value of Paul’s ministry. If we would realize maturity in both grace and knowledge, he is our true teacher. If we would live and walk in spirit, and enter into the very “depths of God,” he is also our guide.

Many godly men of the past, who from various causes may not have fully seen the vastness of such grace as the great apostle discloses, have yet sensed, as it were, something of its celestial character. Who but Paul gives us so exalted a conception of Christ? Who associates the Lord of life and glory with such fullness of reward and regal potency? And who, but he, points the believer to so glorious a consummation of God’s purpose as we find unfolded in the sacred Scriptures?

As “the Image of the invisible God,” Christ is set forth as by no other. Well, then, may the faith he brings us into be the one faith for believers of today. It makes Christ not only our Expectation, but the Reconciler of the universe. And for our everyday life, brings Him so near to our hearts. Should we not, then, thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as did Paul himself, for such rare communications of grace?

Well may Paul have found in Christ his all in all, for he had found in Him the Daysman of God Who could lay His hand upon them both. Paul knew man, but how much he also knew of the power of Christ! And so he was greatly used by God as the ambassador of Christ. It has been said that “Paul never knew Jesus in His lifetime, but nevertheless it was he who best understood Him.” He proclaims the Christ of God in a way to bear Him to the heart in an effulgence of grace and glory.

Would that more preachers and teachers of today could thus see the might and majesty of Christ, as so set forth. But most of them hark back to Christ’s earthly ministry or to other epistles rather than Paul’s, and do not therefore reach the heights of grace and knowledge they would attain by study of Paul’s peerless ministry. How enhanced
What is needed Today

their messages would be if they heralded Christ as the Image of the invisible God and the Son of His love! Ministries would be profoundly changed, and their sermons, dry and dead, would be freshened by the dew of heaven and throbbing with life in its fullness.

A PRESENT NEED

There is need for Christ to be preached as Paul preached Him. And in his writings, the grandeur of the themes are their own eloquence as they so movingly tell of God’s indescribable gift of the Son of His love. Preachers who would saturate themselves in such divine phraseology, could bring truths to the enlightenment of the heart, unheard of by many of God’s people. Darkness would be pierced, and a wonderful light and liberty rest upon speaker and hearer alike. And to our God there would ascend a fragrant odor, for His Christ would be truly exalted, and His excellencies magnified as never before.

May it then be, that to us, to whom God has made known so rich an understanding and blessedness, there might increasingly come “the knowledge transcending love of Christ.”

William Mealand

REPOSING

Our brother, Charles F. Johnson, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was put to repose on April 20, at age 80. “Chuck” was born and raised near Baldwin, the youngest of eight children, among whom were Dorothy (Hibberd) and Lucile (Wimmer). They were deprived of many of the conveniences of life which most people in our country took for granted even in those days of economic depression, yet blessed with what was sufficient for real physical needs and even more so with what was, in his case, conducive for spiritual growth. For he enjoyed an acquaintance with the Scriptures from his youth, and God granted him a growing measure of faith centered on Christ and the grace of God in Him. We sorrow along with his family in this loss, while anticipating the glories ahead which we all shall share with our Lord.
Questions and Answers

“HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER”; GRACE, AND “THE RATION OF SIN”

Question:
A friend asked me about the verses in Ephesians 6 in which Paul, in his own somewhat recast form, makes quotations from the law of Moses, both from Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16:

Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just. ‘Honor your father and mother’ (which is the first precept with a promise), that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth. (Ephesians 6:1-3, CV)

My friend’s concern here is whether from what Paul says in this text we should conclude that we as believers today are obliged to keep the law.

While I rarely look at commentaries, I looked up verse two because of the Old Testament reference, and was surprised that one commentary flatly said something which, upon reading, I nearly choked, which is: “This verse proves the law in the New Testament is not abolished” (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database).

A. E. Knoch did not address this issue in The Concordant Commentary, but perhaps you will have some insight concerning it.

Answer:
The question is whether the fact that Paul in Ephesians 6:2,3 makes quotations from Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16, proves that the law is not “abolished” in the
“New Testament.” The further question, more relevant to ourselves, is whether Paul’s act of making these citations from Moses, proves that the law itself, per se, as a body of instruction, is instruction which we as believers today must heed if we would be obedient to God.

This quotation which you provide from the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary: “This verse proves the law in the New Testament is not abolished,” is in any case syntactically awkward. It would be clearer to say (which presumably is the writer’s actual thought): This verse proves that the law is not abolished in the New Testament.

Then, to make this claim be of any “legal appertainment” to ourselves, the further claim would need to be made: The law is applicable to believers today, who must obey its commandments if they would obey God.

There are two questions, then, before us: (1) Whether, indeed, Paul’s act in Ephesians 6:2,3 of therein making quotations from Moses’ law, “proves” (that is, entails it to be so) that the law is not abolished in the New Testament, and, (2) Whether what Paul says there, in any event, makes it the case that believers today must obey the precepts of the law.

These are the questions that naturally arise here, the correct answers to these questions being what we earnestly wish to obtain. But instead of asking, much less answering, either one of these questions, the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary merely makes the claim, which, clearly stated, is: This verse, Ephesians 6:2, proves that the law is not abolished in the New Testament—the plain implication of which being, therefore, believers today must obey the precepts of the law.

How it is that the words of this verse, Ephesians 6:2, prove the law is not abolished in the New Testament, much less prove that believers today must obey the precepts of the law, is not stated. Instead, a mere assertion is made, devoid of any proof—and yet it is made in such a way as if proof had been provided.

This is the fallacy of petitio principii, “begging the question” (i.e., “assuming the initial point,” the point at issue). Even if a declaration, one not made as a proof-claim but simply as an assertion of truth, happens to be correct, speaking as if a sound argument has been given, especially when no argument at all has been given, is begging the question. Effectually, it is to “beg” the reader to agree with what is claimed anyway—even though no proof has been provided—inimicating him to do so as if the claim-maker’s assertion were so “obviously true” that it was therefore somehow exempt from any need of proof.

The question whether the words of Ephesians 6:2,3 in which Paul refers to Moses’ law, constitute proof that the law is not abolished in the New Testament, is easy to answer. Since all that Paul does here is merely cite Moses in certain words of his law, albeit in a way which is related to his own instruction in verse one, “Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just,” this fact itself is not the proof of anything further. Therefore, the words of Ephesians 6:2 are certainly not the proof of this commentary’s own claim, namely, that the words of Ephesians 6:2 prove that the law is not abolished in the New Testament.

After mentioning Moses’ initial words thus, “Honor your father and mother,” Paul then adds a word of his own: “which is the first precept with a promise.” Our apostle’s words here are interjection in nature (“Honor your father and mother—which is the first precept with a promise—that it may be becoming well with you . . . ”). His words which follow in Ephesians 6:3, “that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth,” are his own inspired version of Moses’ words, declared unto Israel, “that your days may be prolonged and that it may
be well with you on the ground which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you” (Deut.5:16; cp Ex.20:12).

As Paul notes, the fifth precept of the “ten words” of Moses’ law, in its words “that your days may be prolonged and that it may be well with you on the ground which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you” (Deut.5:16), is the first of these precepts with a specific promise “annexed” to it (as John Gill1 once put it). Indeed, in the wisdom of God, it is not only the first precept, but the only one of the principal ten precepts of the law to which any such word of blessing is attached.

By his citation of these words of Moses, Paul illustrates to the children in the ecclesia what is involved in his own instruction to them, which is to be obeying their parents, in the Lord. In saying that they are to do so, Paul adds the words, “for this is just.” In honoring their parents through their obedience to them, not only will the children be doing “the right thing” insofar as giving honor to whom it is due (cf Rom.13:7), but they will also be learning how to be subject to others, wherever this may be called for. The practice of deferring to the prerogatives of others, is a discipline which will be of great benefit to believing children, not only in their youth, but throughout their lives (cp “that it may be becoming well with you,” Eph.6:3). Indeed, how many adults there are who suffer, and cause others to suffer as well, because of their failure to honor the rights of others by subjecting themselves to those self-same rights.

If one wishes to claim that a certain verse “proves” this or that, one should indicate the premises from which such a conclusion is supposed to follow. However, in connection with Ephesians 6:2, there simply are no collectively-true premises, each one true in itself, from which any such proof-claim in favor of present-day lawkeeping may be made.

Of course we do not say that the law was abolished, nor that there are none in Christ to whom it is applicable, but that, for certain, carefully-stated reasons, its precepts, as such, are not directed to ourselves, nor are we otherwise subject to them—including these words in question in Deuteronomy 5:16 and Exodus 20:12 of which Paul speaks.

I addressed this issue of Paul’s citation of Moses here in Ephesians 6:2,3, specifically in one of my articles concerning the law, that entitled, “Grace and Obedience”:

“What some call ‘God’s law’—that is, to speak plainly, the Ten Commandments and perhaps certain other laws from the books of Moses—is that which is said to constitute timeless righteousness. However reasonable and scriptural this notion may seem to be, it simply is not true. We do not seek to obey as such even a single one of the laws given through Moses. Similarly, we do not inconsistently set aside the fourth commandment, that enjoining sabbath-keeping, while seeking to heed the remaining nine ourselves. Not at all. It is merely incidental to our own obedience that, for example, Moses instructed the Israelite to honor his father and mother (the fifth commandment of the ‘ten words’). We are to follow the apostle Paul fully in his teaching (2 Tim.3:10). That is why we, like Israel, are to honor our parents also (Eph.6:1-3).

“Anyone who is at all acquainted with the Pauline writings is aware that the apostle places much emphasis on the importance of the believer’s obedience. He employs the imperative mood and gives many entreaties—clearly and directly—whenever he wishes to present the Lord’s directives concerning us. In so doing, he sometimes presents various instructions to us that were indeed first given as laws for Israel of old, often interpreting them in a fuller and more

exalted sense (e.g., Eph.5:28). Yet there is no such instruction anywhere in his writings concerning the sabbath.

“Likewise, he nowhere teaches that the will of God with respect to the believer’s walk may be found within the books of Moses. May these facts speak to us, concerning the genuine teaching of our apostle, who dared not to speak any of what Christ did not effect through him, ‘for the obedience of the nations’ (Rom.15:18).”

GOD’S COUNSEL FOR TODAY

God’s law (i.e., the “law of the Lord”), given through Moses, is afforded a place in modern Christianity quite foreign to God’s purpose. It is not realized that the law was given to Israel (and to Israel alone) not to show what man can do but what he cannot do.

Nonetheless, many a modern movement seeks to promote the observance of the law even today. For most, the main idea seems to be that man is obliged to keep God’s “moral law,” which they take to be the Ten Commandments. While these particular precepts had a central place within the Mosaic system, it is altogether unscriptural to suggest that they comprise the essence of abiding morality, or that all who would be moral today must yield to their demands.

It is true that, under the evangel of the Circumcision, the law is “the superinduction of a better expectation,” through which the believers of that calling draw near to God (Heb.7:19). Even so, on account of the flesh, effectually speaking, the law was “infirm” (Rom.8:3); thus its precepts were “weak and without benefit; for the law perfects nothing” (Heb.7:18). Consequently, to be Israel, under law, does not bring blessing, but condemnation and death.

Believers today are not under the corpus of law given to Israel of old. God has not imposed these laws upon us, notwithstanding the excellence we may perceive in them or any suppositions of our own as to their perceived appropriateness for our obedience today.

One may not “pick and choose” which of Moses’ precepts he will take to himself and which he will not, according to his own speculations and reasonings to the effect that certain of these laws have been “done away” while others yet remain. Intrinsically, the entire law—even in its most minute particular—was holy, just and good, even ideal; and the Israelite under law was required to heed it.

Yet it by no means follows from this that its precepts and statutes constitute timeless righteousness with respect to the personal behavior of all men, everywhere, regardless of era or divine administration. Therefore it is both false and foolish to claim that if we would be holy and do what is just and good, we must do what Moses declares.

If God would have us know what is pleasing to Him with respect to the walk of the believer today, He must send us an apostle to make this known to us. And if it should be that any particulars encompassed within His will for us at present should include certain explicit counsel which, incidentally, was once also His counsel to Israel of old, then He will need to send us a spokesman or prophet to make this clear.

May the reader be given the eyes to see that God has done this very thing; and that He has done so through the ministry of the apostle Paul (the apostle of the nations), as recorded in his prophetic scriptures (cf Rom.11:13; 16:26).

ELLiptical, YET MANIFEST

In closing our present inquiry concerning Ephesians...
6:1-3, let us now read the entirety of this passage at once, considering it as a whole:

“Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this
is just. ‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first
precept with a promise—that it may be becoming well
with you, and you should be a long time on the earth.”

The careful reader will note that verses two and three:
“‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first pre-
cept with a promise—that it may be becoming well with
you, and you should be a long time on the earth,” are a
sentence fragment. It will be noted as well that, except
for Paul’s inspired comment concerning the words which
he cites and relates from Moses, comprised in verses two
and three, the whole of that which Paul himself has to say

4. This is not to say that the words of verses two and three could in no
case be used so as to form a complete thought. It is instead to say that
in order for them to do so, they would need to inhere in a declaration
that was a “stand-alone,” independent statement, with their interjec-
tory phrase being words of the original speaker. Here, however, they
are used not independently but dependently, and, the interjectory
words therewithin are not words of the original speaker, Moses, but
of the citing-speaker, Paul, who in the remainder of this phrase is cit-
ing the one who originally spoke these words.

As the words comprising verses two and three appear here, con-
joined to and as the complement of the words of verse one even as
with the interjectory phrase, “which is the first precept with a prom-
ise” being words of Paul, not of Moses, they do not constitute a com-
plete thought.

A sentence, or independent clause, requires at least a subject and
a verb (a verb-only predicate), a predicate which modifies the sub-
ject, in view of which the subject is “predicated,” which is to say,
declared. Ordinarily, a sentence includes some additional words as
well that explain the subject. The words of Ephesians 6:2,3, however,
even though numerous, as they are employed here within the whole
of Ephesians 6:1-3, do not include even a verb, much less any further
predicate phrase. Therefore, as used within this passage, they are not
an independent clause or sentence, but only a sentence fragment.

The substantive content of an elliptical phrase is not open
to speculation. Where an ellipsis occurs, the content of the
ellipsis is both (1) self-evident, and (2) self-governing.

Where an ellipsis is present, while it is true that the specific
words constitutive of the ellipsis are left to the reader
to supply, the discerning reader will nevertheless perceive,
not only that an ellipsis is necessarily present, but will also perceiving the implicit substantive essence of the elliptical
thought in view—which must be added to the explicit decla-
ration, in order to complete the thought.

Therefore, the reader will supply the albeit omitted (i.e.,
elliptical) yet logically manifest idea in words which are,
in fact, reflective of the essential thought in view. This is
the case even if a certain able reader should phrase the ellipsis somewhat in different words than another equally able reader.

In conclusion, then, we may be sure that in Ephesians 6:2,3, where Paul variously quotes and recasts certain words of “God’s law” given to Israel (namely, “Honor your father and mother” . . . that it may be becoming well with you, and you should be a long time on the earth”), he does not do so in support of any claim which asserts that we today must obey this self-same law. Instead, our apostle does so inasmuch as this instruction of Moses to Israel accords with and explicates his own instruction to us, which is: “Children, be obeying your parents, in the Lord, for this is just.”

* Question:

(1) I am mindful that “eternal life” (or, life for the ages) is a “gift” (Rom.6:23, AV); but still, we must accept Christ in order to get this gift. I know that you emphasize that we are saved by grace, and I agree with this (Eph.2:8). And I also know that you put a lot of emphasis on the apostle Paul. But when he was asked, “What must I do to be saved?” he didn’t say, You don’t need to do anything; instead, he said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved . . .” (Acts 16:30,31, AV).

I will admit that if we get salvation for accepting Christ, this doesn’t sound like salvation is a gift. On the other hand, we need to take responsibility for our actions.

(2) I know that I should not let sin be “running things” (“reigning” over me, so that I just give in and obey its lusts whenever temptation arises; Rom.6:12). Likewise, I know that even though we are under grace, I should always seek to do right and not sin. The truth

Teachings of Grace, Falsely So-Called

is though, so many times, I just give in and go ahead and sin, anyhow. This is especially upsetting because I really do not want to sin, and I am so ashamed of myself for still being sinful.

(3) Why does the Concordant Version translate the first part of Romans 6:23, “For the ration of Sin is death”? This seems strange. I am used to reading this verse, as in the Authorized Version and other translations, “For the wages of sin is death,” which seems easier to understand. “The wages of sin is death” makes sense, since we all die because of our sins, unless we accept Christ.

If you can clear up any of these things for me, I would be grateful.

Answer:

(1) The “grace” that says that one must do something in order to get that grace, is grace falsely so-called.

Even as you say, “If we get salvation for accepting Christ, this doesn’t sound like salvation is a gift.” I would only add that if it were the case that we did “get salvation” for—which is to say, in return for—accepting Christ, then salvation would not be a gift. That is, in that case, it would not be a gratuitous and gracious provision—uncalled for, and granted not as a reward, but as a favor.

Since, however, our justification is granted us “gratuitously in [God’s] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom.3:24), it follows that we do not obtain salvation in return for believing, or in return for anything else that we do.

We would never say to the unbeliever: If you would become a saint (that is, one who is “in Christ”), there is nothing you need to do; it matters not whether you believe or do not believe.

Instead, in response to the question, “What must I be doing that I may be saved?” our answer is the same as that
of Paul and Silas: “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved...” (cf Acts 16:30,31).

This is simply to say, This is what one must do; one must believe. But this is only because salvation comes through faith; hence faith is not an option, but a necessity. Even so, this is not at all to say that we are required to believe; instead, it is simply to say that our salvation is not apart from faith, faith which God graciously grants us.

You are certainly correct to say that we need to “take responsibility” for our actions. This is to say that we need to accept and acknowledge our own accountability, while seeking to fulfill our obligations. This fact, however, simply speaks of our duty, broadly construed. It does not follow from this that believing the evangel is something over which we exercise “veto power,” in any sense of ultimate control.

Since our justification is granted gratuitously in God’s grace—not in response to our having met some type of requirement—it follows that salvation is not granted in response to meeting any sort of a requirement, which includes any requirement over which we might exercise some sort of veto power or control.

Insofar as our salvation in Christ is concerned, the question as to the true nature of human choice is simply irrelevant (which question we are therefore not presently addressing). In connection with the evangel, then, it is a “red herring” even to bring up the question of “free will,” much less to affirm anything in particular concerning it.

Besides, believing the evangel does not result from some sort of mere human decision, but from the powerful operations of God. “Faith” (or “faithfulness,” cf Gal.5:22) is a fruit of the spirit; not a “requirement” of salvation. It is “in the grace of God,” then, that we believe (cp 1 Cor.15:10,11), being “graciously granted... to be believing” on Christ (Phil.1:29).

Thus “God parts to each”—that is, to each member of the ecclesia, which is to say, to each one whom He calls—“the measure of faith” which each one enjoys (Rom.12:3). Accordingly, then, among “those who are called,” all enjoy common faith, common faith in the declaration: “Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor.1:23b,24).

In this light, then, we especially rejoice in Paul’s testimony: “Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He designates beforehand, these He calls also, and whom He calls, these He justifies also; now whom He justifies, these He glorifies also” (Rom.8:28-30; cp Eph.1:4; 2 Tim.1:9).

“BEING FREED FROM SIN”

(2) It is fitting that we be ashamed of our sins, especially when we contemplate our former days, before we first believed, when we lived as utter “slaves of Sin [and] were free as to Righteousness” (Rom.6:20,21). Even so,

Goose Chase; Throwing Sand in the Air: “Smoked herring (early 15c.; they turn red when cured) supposedly was used by fugitives to put bloodhounds off the scent (1680’s); hence, in a metaphorical sense (1884), a ‘red herring’ speaks of something used to divert attention from the basic issue” (Online Etymology Dictionary; from Dictionary.com website: http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/red herring).
now, as we find grace to do so, may we be “forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front” (Phil.3:13).

It is surely true, even as you say, that we should not “let” (that is, permit) “Sin” to be “running things in our lives, such that we “just give in and obey its lusts whenever temptation arises.”

This idea of permission, however, is not Paul’s thought here, in the words, “Let not Sin, then, be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts” (Rom.6:12). “Let” represents the imperative mood. The sense is, We are to “see to it,” then, that Sin is not “reigning” in our mortal bodies—standing over us as an utter despot, with a view to the accomplishment of its wicked goal: “for [us] to be obeying its lusts.”

Paul had just said, “Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall be living together with Him also” (followed by the intervening words:) “...having perceived that Christ, being roused from among the dead, is no longer dying. Death is lording it over Him no longer, for in that He died, He died to Sin once for all time, yet in that He is living, He is living to God. Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be: dead, indeed, to Sin, yet living to God in Christ Jesus, our Lord.”

The apostle therefore declares: “...Let not Sin, then, be reigning in your mortal body, for you to be obeying its lusts” (Rom.6:8-12).

In speaking herein of our “living together with Christ,” Paul speaks primarily not of our future living together with Him, but of our present living together with Him, in spirit, by faith (cp Rom.8:13; Col.2:5). In using the imperative mood, Paul does not do so in order to set forth a legal command, but to provide us with a word of encouragement by way of entreaty for the sake of our faithfulness, lest sin

in the Power of the Evangel

should be utterly “reigning” in our mortal bodies—doing whatever it wills, whenever it wills.

The basis of Paul’s encouragement here is the fact that when Christ died for our sins (1 Cor.15:3), “we died together with Christ” (cp Col.3:3; hence, “we believe that we shall be living together with Him also” (Rom.6:8).

Paul therefore entreats us, on the basis of whatever measure of strength we may enjoy in the power of whatever measure of faith God gives us (cf Rom.12:3). Our faith is in the fact that, even now, since we shall be living together with Christ, Christ, therefore, shall be living together with us.

Since we died together with Christ—and one who dies has been “justified from Sin” (Rom.6:7)—as those now “being freed from Sin, yet [being] enslaved to God, [we] have [our] fruit for holiness. Now the consummation is life eonian” (Rom.6:22; cp 1 Tim.6:12).

In a corresponding sense, those in Christ Jesus “are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit” (Rom.8:4b). It is not just that this is the way we ought to be walking; instead, it is that this is the way that we are walking. While we are mindful that “even on our best days” this is so only in limited measure, may we not lose sight of the fact that, nevertheless, we do have a new and better walk in Christ—all our failings notwithstanding.

“RATIONS,” NOT “WAGES”

(3) As you noted, the Concordant Version translates the first part of Romans 6:23 as, “For the ration of Sin is death...”

It is true that, being such a familiar phrase to practically all readers of the English Bible, the Authorized Version’s rendering seems easier to understand. Thus, according to popular tradition, it “makes sense.” This is because almost everyone supposes that we die because we sin. Indeed,
“Taking Along” Christ our Saviour

this notion is in no small part based upon this mistranslation, “The wages of sin is death.”

You spoke of our “accepting” Christ, saying that we will die unless we “accept” Him, whereas men die, of course, whether or not they accept Christ. In making mention of our “acceptance” of Christ, however, we are not to imagine some sort of “transactional” event. This is because our salvation is a matter of grace; hence it is not to be conceived of as if it were some sort of quid pro quo (i.e., “this for that”) exchange. Instead, when speaking of our “accepting” of Christ, we are simply referring to our “taking Him along” with us, not only as we once first began to do so, but as we continue to do so, throughout our life of faith.

A messenger of the Lord, appearing in a trance to Joseph, said, “. . . Take along the little Boy and His mother and flee into Egypt . . .” (Matt.2:13). When the apostles related to Jesus “whatever they do and whatever they teach,” we read that Jesus, “taking them along . . . retreats privately into a city called Bethsaida” (Luke 9:10). “As, then, you accepted Christ Jesus, the Lord [i.e., as you once began to ‘take Him along’ with you],” be continuing, accordingly, to be “. . . walking in Him” (Col.2:6).

We do not die because we sin, but as a result of Adam’s sin. Thus, to die, we are dying (cp Gen.2:17): “. . . Even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned . . .” (Rom.5:12). While it is on account of death (in the form of mortality) having become our portion that we ourselves sin, nevertheless, death “passed through into all mankind” because of Adam’s sin.8

The word, misthos (HIRE) corresponds to the English “wages” (e.g., “for the scripture is saying: ‘A threshing ox you shall not be muzzling,’ and ‘Worthy is the worker of his wages’” (1 Tim.5:18; cp 1 Cor.3:8; James 5:4).

The word opsōnion (PROVISION-PURCHASE), however, used here in Romans 6:23, does not speak of wages. Instead, it speaks of a provision which is granted to another.

Paul did not work for “wages”; rather, even as he says to the Corinthians, in a figure: “Other ecclesias I despoil, getting rations [i.e., “provisions”] for dispensing to you” (2 Cor.11:8; cp “Who is warring at any time supplying his own rations?” 1 Cor.9:7).

In Romans 6:23, the context is “slaves of Sin” (Rom.6:17-20), Slaves are not paid “wages”; instead, they are dispensed whatever rations their master sees fit to provide them. Throughout the context of Romans 6:6-23, sin is personified (thus it is capitalized in the Concordant Version, “Sin”); and, it appears not as a beneficent master, but as one who sees fit to grant its slaves nothing better than death itself. Death, in the form of the dying process (cp “on which all sinned,” Rom.5:12), is what “sustains us” in Sin’s service.

“The slave of Sin receives rations, not wages. He is not hired but fed . . .

“The false idea that men die for what they do is based on this text, even though the context is not concerned with what we do, but what we are. Take away the inference based on the false rendering wages and the way is open to believe the uniform testimony of the Scriptures that judgment is the “wages” of sin (i.e., it is what we receive for what we do), not death, while our mortality is what leads us into death.”9

J.R.C.

7. Para lamb[an]ō is variously rendered, “take along,” “take aside,” “accept.”
THE SOUL NOT IMMORTAL

The expression “immortal soul” flatly contradicts another popular saying “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Both cannot be true. In the original there are other passages which confirm the latter. Twice a dead soul is spoken of, but in both cases the Authorized Version has altered it to “dead body” (Num.8:6; Haggai 2:13). Now where does God ever speak of the soul as being immortal? On the contrary, He distinctly denies immortality to all except Christ, now that He has been vivified, and is beyond the reach of death (1 Tim.6:15,16). The doctrine of the soul’s immortality is the false foundation of our creeds. Though definitely denied by the Scriptures, it continues to be the basis on which Christianity rests. As a result the facts as to the human soul and spirit are practically unknown, and resurrection, rousing and vivification, which are vital to God’s truth, are almost forgotten.

THEOLOGY SINS AS TO SIN

Theology is thoroughly mistaken as to every aspect of sin. It fails to see that sin is a falling short. It ascribes it to an evil “principle,” instead of a lack of spirit. It transmits death through sin instead of sin through death. It refuses to acknowledge that Christ can cope with sin through His sacrifice. It makes it eternal instead of limiting it to the eons. It makes it an unwanted intruder into God’s plans instead of a means to accomplish His purpose. It seeks to show that Satan originated it, and so robs God of His deity. It seats sin in human nature instead of in the flesh. Now we wish to show that theology is astray as to sin’s entrance also. From this it would almost seem that theology is the greatest sinner of them all!

FLESH UNDER LAW

To understand why it was that Eve could not resist the prompting of the flesh, we may consider the same situation under the law. God’s instructions to the first pair proved to be impotent, just as the law later was weak through the flesh (Rom.8:3). Even today there are many saints who strive to keep the law (which itself is a serious sin), but they find that the flesh foils their efforts (Rom.7). Even those who are delivered from the bondage of the law still find a conflict, in which the flesh lusts against the spirit (Gal.5:17). Crucifixion, not salvation, is the fitting fate for the flesh (Gal.5:24). It betrayed Eve, it destroyed Israel, it is the weakness and the woe of humanity.

THE FALL

That theological stand-by, the “fall,” is a term never used in this connection in the Scriptures, hence I have been suspicious of it, knowing that such words often cover a mass of ignorance, and hinder an approach to the truth. Besides, it is one of those traps which are baited with enough Scripture to snare the seeker after truth. If I had come right out and said that I did not believe in the “fall,” the statement would have created a false impression, as if I did not accept what the Scriptures say with reference to the offense [BESIDE-FALL-EFFECT] of Adam, which opened up the way for sin and death to all his descendants. As a fact, I do believe what they say, but not what theology has to say regarding a “fall,” of which God’s Word does not speak. The term was invented in order to relieve God of the responsibility of Adam’s action, and so block the way to the truth, that, ultimately, all is out of God.
The idea which the “fall” is supposed to convey is something like this: God made all things perfect and never intended that Adam should transgress. He wanted Adam to enjoy a sinless, happy existence in paradise for all eternity. But, somehow, without God having anything to do with it, and without His fault, Adam spoiled His whole plan by eating an apple which He did not want him to eat. Apples are generally a healthful fruit. I usually eat one early in the morning, with no ill effects, but, somehow, it turned Adam and Eve into sinners beyond reclaim, except for those who are rescued through the death of Christ by faith. We dare not speak of this as due to a mistake on God’s part, so we shove it off His shoulders to those of Adam, who passed on the blame to Eve, who, in turn, passed it on to the serpent. To show that we think it was really due to something like an accident on the part of our first parents, we call it the “fall.”

Few think deeply enough to ask, Why did Adam fall? Why did not God make him so that he could not disobey? God can do this, and has done it in the case of Christ, and will do it for all His saints in resurrection. Why did He plant a tree right in the middle of Eden which could cause his fall, and then forbid him to eat of it? Would it not have been much wiser and safer to root it out altogether, and not allow a single tree of this kind anywhere within his reach, not even outside of the garden? And why allow the serpent access to Eve? Why create a serpent at all if that was the kind of an animal it was? But, deeper still, what was there in Adam and Eve which responded to the suggestion of the serpent, and was tempted by the fruit of the tree? Is it not clear that, before they sinned, there was something within them which yielded to the words of the serpent and caused them to eat of the forbidden fruit? What was this? Scripture calls it the flesh.

Apart from the outward incentive to call forth the tendencies of the flesh and cause it to step over the mark, all was very good. In Eden, man’s whole environment was calculated to meet his physical desires. Nothing afflicted his soul, and he knew no evil. It needed the suggestion of the serpent to stir up the flesh in opposition to God. Evidently its disposition even then, as now, was enmity to God, or Eve would have resented the insinuations of the serpent. It did not have the ability to please God. It was not subject to God’s law (Rom.8:7,8). These traits are not the result of mortality and sin. They were inherent in human flesh, put there by the Creator, for the same reason that He planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and sent the serpent into the garden. If Adam had been created immortal and sin-repellant, why plant the tree or send the serpent? It was all a part of the same plan, and was rooted deep in the heart of God, which craved the love and adoration of sinners saved by grace.

MAN CREATED MORTAL

Adam was mortal and depended on food and air for his subsistence. Had these been withheld, he would have wasted away. His life was contingent upon the continual renewal of his flesh by the blood due to the vitality derived from the soil and atmosphere, which, in turn, receive their vital virtues from the sun. Hence he was by no means immortal. Shut off the air from his lungs for a short time, and his spirit would have left him. Cut off food from his stomach for a long period, and his soul would have departed. Moreover, if he should breathe devitalized air, or gas, or should eat a substance which would interfere with the operation of his internal organs, such as we call poison, even if he should not die at once, it would introduce a gradual decay which would lead to death if no remedy were used to set matters right again.

It was the flesh in Adam that was vulnerable. To us the
flesh seems to be the substantial, permanent part of a human being. On the contrary, it is merely an evanescent, vitalized form of the ground on which we walk. The flesh of everyone changes continuously, so that, literally, we are not the same flesh that we were some time ago. The self-consciousness, the so-called "personality," is not inherent in the flesh at all. We certainly are the same person after having lived half a century, but we may have had seven different fleshly frames within that period. The figure "all flesh is grass" (1 Peter 1:24) expresses this most graphically. Most of us fail to find the figure and simply take it that humanity is as grass, and will pass away into oblivion. Not so. Only one feature of mankind is as evanescent as that. The flesh is that corruptible part of man, as he is now constituted, in the first creation, which brought in infirmity, dishonor and death, and which continues to be the seat of sin. It is in contrast to other elements in man, and in conflict with them. Therefore we do not read that the corruption of all mankind brought on the deluge, but that all flesh had corrupted its way (Gen.6:12). Adam's life was limited because he also was flesh (Gen.6:3). God did not destroy all animals, but all flesh (Gen.6:17). It is startling and illuminating to read that, by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified, yet we ourselves are justified by faith (Rom.3:20-24). Moreover, the flesh may be exterminated, yet the spirit saved (1 Cor.5:5). No flesh shall glory (1 Cor.1:29), and what a catalogue is given of the works of the flesh (Gal.5:19)! We should always distinguish between the whole man and the flesh, which is the knave, the rogue, the villain in the tragedy of humanity.

The important point to apprehend is that the flesh in the human pair, even before sin came in, was imbued with a leaning, a tendency, a disposition, a predilection, a proclivity, a proneness toward, a desire or lust for (1 John 2:16; 2 Peter 2:18) soul-satisfaction and pleasure and soul-ish wisdom, that amounted to a will (Eph.2:3; Rom.8:3), which was at enmity with God (Rom.8:7), which made it sin's flesh (Rom.8:3), as well as man's. It is usual to ascribe "innocence" to Adam and his wife. This term is not used of them, and must be kept out of this investigation, lest it lead us astray. The fact is that both Adam and Eve are called flesh, and this figure, rather than the literal body, or man, is used of him and the race thereafter in close connection with corruption and death (compare Gen.2:23,24 with 6:3,12,13,17).

**CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY**

So-called "Conditionalists" rightly claim that man is mortal, and that there is no immortality except in Christ. But the word "conditional" is not in the Scriptures, and is rather indefinite. It seems to suggest that man must do his part in securing life, so I have kept clear of it, although I was convinced that man is not immortal and the only way he can receive endless life is through Christ, not through Adam. I would prefer to use the term as applied to Adam before he transgressed, and to all who eat of the tree of life in the eons to come. Adam had interminable life under certain conditions, so we may say that he had "conditional" immortality. So long as he was supplied with the necessary sustenance, ate nothing harmful, and was not destroyed by violence, there is no question that he would continue to live indefinitely. The same is true if he had been given access to the tree of life. That would even counteract harmful food, such as he had eaten. It gives "conditional" immortality.

**THE "DEVIL" AND THE FLESH**

The favorite lesson of a Sunday school superintendent was based on the following clever words, which were put on the blackboard as he proceeded:
With this as a basis he would expatiate especially on the
vileness of the "devil." As an aid to the memory it was
good. As an expression of Scripture it was bad, for it sug-
gests that Satan is the source of man's immoral sins. It
calumnitates the Adversary and exculpates the flesh. Satan
is not associated with the unmentionable depravities of
humanity. These arise out of his own heart. They are res-
ident in his flesh.

A simple and effective method of discovering the vast
difference between the works of the flesh and the efforts
of the Adversary is to study all the references to each in
a concordance. Then it will be seen that Satan does not
tempt men to commit the crimes we usually catalogue as
immoral, while these are the specialty of the flesh. In gen-
eral we may classify the crimes committed by or through
Satan as spiritual. They are directed against God and His
great goal rather than concerned with the corruption of
man. Even when they affect the flesh, they aim at the spirit.

Perhaps the most striking passage to show the differ-
ence between Satan and the flesh is 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.
Corinth seems to have been a very immoral city. Even one
of the saints there sank below the level of that degenerate
age, and Paul, though absent, directs the ecclesia how to
deal with the case. We might imagine that he had fallen
into the clutches of Satan, and that the apostle would seek
to deliver him from the power of the Adversary. He does
the very opposite! He is not snatched away from Satan in
order to be saved, but delivered to the Adversary in order
that his flesh may be exterminated. So it is that his spirit

was saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Satan is a spirit
and is concerned with our spirits, not our flesh, except as
it reacts on the spirit.

Job's case is very clear on this point. Satan did not tempt
him to engage in an orgy of immorality. He filled his flesh
with misery, so that Job should curse God and die (Job
2:9). The false friends did not apprehend this fact. Even
Job did not understand that the real struggle was between
God and Satan. Only at the end did he grasp the great
truth that Satan's attack on his flesh was used by God for
his highest spiritual benefit. It is thus that the Adversary
fulfills his mission. It is his job to see that man is tried
and tested, not, indeed, to prove his power, but to dem-
strate his impotence.

When our Lord was tried by the Adversary, again it
was an attack on His spiritual relationship to God, rather
than any enticement to moral delinquency, and our Lord
countered it accordingly. After having fasted for days,
what crime could there be in turning stones into bread
to assuage His hunger? Is not this miracle only the accel-
eration of the usual process of nature? Stone is weathered
by the sun and air, and turned into soil. Plants reach down
and take from it the substance and vitality which, in turn,
is stored up in the grain. This is ground and kneaded and
baked into bread for human consumption. He Who does
this in the course of eons can do it in a second. In its place
it is eminently right and commendable. Probably we shall
experience an even greater miracle constantly in the glo-
rious bodies which will be ours when vivified. Perhaps we
will live directly on the sunlight which turns the stone into
bread (Matt.4:1-4).

But the error here is fundamental. All life is sourced in
God and it is not right to use His sustaining forces apart
from His direction. Man, as he is now constituted, must,
indeed, live on food which once was a stone, but not on
that *alone*. He must eat in accord with the word of the God Who created the food, and Who sustains the eater. At present man is not constituted to eat stones, for God wishes him to experience the evil connected with the production of his food. There must be toil and trial and tears in order to put him in his proper place before His Creator, and the Model Man is not going to evade these because He has the power to do so. He was still on the way to the cross, which must precede the path to the crown. Satan’s object was not to make Him a glutton or a winebibber, as His human enemies called Him on a later occasion, but to draw Him away from absolute dependence on the word of the living God.

The cleverness of the Adversary is evident in his next proposition. Seeing that Christ is determined to be guided by the Scriptures, he quotes a passage to show that his request is in accord with what is written. He takes our Lord to that corner of the temple area which is built up high above the Kidron valley. I have stood upon the wall at this point, but it made me dizzy to look down. It certainly was not a temptation for my flesh to cast myself down. Rather the opposite, for the flesh shrinks from the possible suffering which would ensue if death were not instantaneous. Yet *He* certainly had no need to be afraid. His hour had not yet come. If He could walk on water, why not on air? After His resurrection He went to a spot within sight of the temple, on the other side of the Kidron, on the Mount of Olives, and ascended to heights which dwarf the temple wall to nothingness.

In the ninety-first Psalm there are many precious promises to the one who trusts in Yahweh and makes Him his refuge. Above all others, our Lord had a right to “claim the promises by faith.” How many of the Lord’s dear people try to do this today! How many are disappointed! How it has destroyed faith in the word of God! How much hypocrisy it has engendered! If they really believed this passage, many would take much pride in displaying this faith by jumping down from all sorts of dangerous places, in order to put God on trial, to see if He is true to His word. But this is not faith, but the lack of it! It would be in direct conflict with another Scripture which forbids such dealings with the Deity. The Psalmist did not write concerning such a man. The promises are for those who really trust, and do not need to try to see if it is true. Such was the nature of Satan’s trial. *It made no appeal to the passions.*

In his third attempt to win worship from our Lord, Satan is largely on Scriptural ground, and much that he says is true. The kingdoms of this world are in his hand, and he is able to give them to the man who will worship him. On the other side, Christ is entitled to this glory and will yet take His place at the head of the nations. Nevertheless our Lord indignantly spurned the offer, and bade Satan go hence, because he had claimed the worship that belongs to God alone and to those who represent Him.

The spiritual character of these trials should help us to understand that the mission of Satan is not in the realm of flesh, but of spirit. He is opposed to faith in God, even when he artfully suggests that we put God on trial or when he produces Scripture for his suggestions and demands. Few saints, alas! are able to counter with Scripture as our Lord did, because they do not intelligently apprehend the role in which Satan has been cast by God, and confuse it with that of a mythical “devil” who inflames the flesh and leads men to vile and vicious deeds. Only indirectly, as in the case of Adam, does the Adversary influence mankind in the direction of immorality, that is by leading him into opposition to God’s will.

Satan sowed the darnel or “tares” among the disciples of the kingdom. This figure is most suggestive. An immoral man could hardly qualify, for the point lies in the outward
Satan is as a Messenger of Light

 likeness of the two plants. Immorality cannot well be disguised sufficiently to fulfill the figure. On the contrary, as the disciples would be moral and upright, it would be such characters who could keep a place among them without detection (Matt.13:19).

Judas was an acknowledged apostle of our Lord for years. No one could have occupied such a public position for long if he had even a taint of immorality about him. Yet he is characterized by the same title as the Adversary (John 6:70).

It was the self-righteous Jews whom our Lord characterized as the offspring of the Adversary (John 8:44). Such a sinister name was never given by Him to tax gatherers and sinners. He showed the sincerest sympathy for those whose flesh had led them into sin, but utmost harshness clothed His dealings with those who were under the guidance of Satan. Surely God's thoughts are not ours, and His ways are not our ways!

That mankind is incurably opposed to God, even without Satan's temptations, is fully demonstrated by the thousand years during which the Adversary will be bound. Such a long period of probation, under the beneficent rule of Israel, in whose hearts God's law has found a place, during which there will be physical blessings such as this earth has not yet seen, ought to cure mankind of their enmity toward God. Instead of that, it flashes into a flame as soon as Satan reappears.

Satan, as well as man, fails because of the infirmity of man's flesh. He seeks to serve man, and is on the side of reform and world betterment—apart from God. He has most cleverly deceived Christendom, even as he deluded Eve, so that it now is well organized to further his schemes for a better world, without acknowledging the sovereignty of Israel's Messiah.

A. E. Knoch
THROUGH THE OBEDIENCE OF THE ONE

The sober conclusion of Romans 1:18-3:20 is that not one is righteous—not even one. By works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in God’s sight (Rom.3:10,20).

The exultant conclusion of Romans 3:21-5:21 is that all mankind will experience justifying of life, and that the many sinners who stand under the condemnation of death and sin shall be constituted righteous. The grace of God in giving His Son for our sakes superexceeds with righteousness and life over and against all the ever multiplying sins and offenses of mankind.

How did we get from no one being righteous in God’s sight to all enjoying justified life and being solidly established in righteousness?

The evangel of God concerning His Son tells us how. It is through the one righteous act of faith and obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is not through us. We are the obtainers of what God has achieved through the death of His Son. This is the message we, as those designated beforehand (Rom.8:30), are believing, upon which further outpourings of grace in Paul’s later epistles are built. How necessary, then, to begin right—to begin with this evangel of God concerning His Son, for which Paul was severed.

WELL DONE

An evangel is a well-message. The evangel announced in Romans announces a deed well done that it may be becoming well with us, for the glory of God.
In the parable of the talents entrusted to three slaves, the master said to each of the two who gained double from what they were given, “Well done! good and faithful slave” (Matt. 25:21, 23). In Ephesians Paul points to the ideal conduct of children, citing Deuteronomy 5:16 (cp. Ex. 20:12), “‘Honor your father and mother’... that it may be becoming well with you” (Eph. 6:1-3). The evangel of God, however, does not speak of the faithful acts of slaves to their lord, or the obedience of children to their parents, but of the good and faithful obedience of Jesus Christ to His God and Father in dying for sinners so that it might become well with them. What Christ did in thus honoring His Father (“not as I will, but as Thou!”) was well done. He was good and obedient in every way, and His well-done work is the cause of it becoming well with us. It becomes well with us, not because of what we are or have done, but all because of what Christ is and has done so well.

WHAT HAS CHRIST DONE?

The well-message of God concerning His Son says:

For Christ, while we are still infirm, still in accord with the era, for the sake of the irreverent, died... God is commending this love of His to us, seeing that, while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes. (Rom. 5:6, 8)

Christ died. The evangel, in which we stand and through which we are saved states as its foundational declaration that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3). Through the years of His terrestrial toil in which He took the form of a slave, in the likeness of humanity, He did many marvelous things, doing everything well and faithfully. But these deeds of obedience are not the subject of the evangel brought by Paul, by which, in believing it, we are being saved (1 Cor. 15:1, 2). The one just act of Romans 5:18 is Christ’s act of dying on the cross unto the state of death.

Dying unto Death

It was an act involving intense suffering, for it was the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8), and this speaks of the greatest of pain and lowest of humiliation. The first word of Scripture describing His death is hurt (Gen. 3:15). Later such verbs as wounded and crushed are used (Isa. 53:5). In this we see the application of the words “you shall be dying” (Gen. 2:17). But the manner of Christ’s death must not be allowed to obliterate the seriousness of the fact that when He gave up His spirit He became dead. In this we see the application to Christ of the words “to die” in Genesis 2:17, as well as the principal way in which the sacrifices of old were types of Him.

To be sure, having announced that Christ died for our sins, and was entombed as the undeniable evidence that He was dead, the evangel which we have accepted continues with the exultant declaration that Christ was roused (1 Cor. 15:4). For if Christ has not been roused we are still in our sins (1 Cor. 15:17). Apart from His resurrection, there is no sequel of good in the death of the old humanity and no hope for a new creation. Consequently, the evangel of God concerning His Son concludes with the joyous word that Christ has been roused!

Nevertheless, the glory of the resurrection into a vivified life is built on the justifying which is secured in the shedding of Christ’s blood. He was roused because of our justifying (Rom. 4:25; 5:9). So that we would become dead to our sins and offenses we died together with Christ and were entombed together with Him, and then roused together with Him (Rom. 6:2-4; Col. 2:12, 13; 3:3; cp. Eph. 2:1-6). That Christ died is fundamental. This was absolutely necessary so that the old humanity would be crucified together with Him, and the body of Sin be nullified (Rom. 6:6). “For one who dies has been justified from Sin” (Rom. 6:7). Here we see, not only His obedience to His Father’s will, but the love of Christ for us, and for all,
“judging this, that if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died” (2 Cor.5:14). In the death of Christ, the dying, sinning race was put to death.

WELL FOR US

In announcing what Christ has done so well, the well-message of God points to the ways in which this is well for us and altogether to the glory of God.

First of all the death of Jesus Christ (expressed by the words, “Jesus Christ’s faith”) is the channel through which the righteousness of God is made manifest (Rom.3:21,22). It is through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (in the shedding of His blood) that we are justified (Rom.3:24; 5:9). It is by this means that God is displayed as righteous in justifying sinners, as they become identified with the benefits of the faith of Jesus (Rom.3:26).

Then, furthermore, it is in that Christ died for us as we are, irreverent and infirm sinners and wanting of the glory of God, that God commends His love. In the giving of His Son, Who died for our sakes, God displays the depths of His love, pouring it out even now in the hearts of the believer in bringing us before Him justified and conciliated to Him, in Whom we are glorying. This love delivers us who are sinners from condemnation into righteousness, but even more than this it draws us (who are enemies) in peace into what Paul will soon describe as “the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom.8:21).

Consequently, we who are believing have gotten the spirit of sonship, in which we are crying “Abba, Father!” (Rom.8:15) through every experience of life. Thus we say with Paul, “I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord” (Rom.8:38,39).

Moreover, what we have obtained in superabundance of grace and gratuity is, as Paul expresses it in 1 Timothy 4:10, a special salvation connected with God’s glory as the Saviour of all mankind. God’s righteousness manifested and operating through the faith of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners is “for all,” and it is in light of this fact that, by God’s grace, it has already been applied to believers, on whom it is placed (Rom.3:22). This has been made clear in Romans 5, where, in expounding the evangel as it relates to the believer, Paul brings out the wider viewpoint involving all mankind in relation to Adam and to Christ, starting with verse 12.

Just as Adam brought in death and sin for all, so Christ brings in life and righteousness for all. Thus in Romans 5:18 we learn of the justifying of the lives of all mankind, and this achieved alone through the righteous act of Jesus Christ. Now in Romans 5:19 we are told that the innumerable victims who are constituted sinners through the disobedience of Adam shall be constituted righteous through the obedience of Christ, in God’s grace, and not of themselves.

ROMANS 5:19

This evangel as it is evangelized in the second half of Romans 5:19 is now before us:

Through the obedience of the One the many shall be constituted just. (Rom.5:19b)

The One is the One Man, Jesus Christ (v.15), the One, Jesus Christ (v.17).

His obedience is His act of dying for sinners.

It is through this means, through Christ’s obedience in dying on the cross unto death that sinners become just, that is, righteous-ones.

The many are the same many mentioned earlier in this verse, all the many people who are sinners because of the
THE ONE AND THE MANY

We must suppose that Paul knew what he was talking about and that he meant what he was saying. The context makes it certain that the word “one” in verse 19 first refers to Adam and then to Jesus Christ. We may also suppose that the connective term “For” at the beginning of verse 19 is used in the sense of “since;” verse 19 directly supports verse 18 and provides evidence for what has been said. Verse 19 does not introduce a new line of thought, but develops and adds to what was said in verse 18.

The word many in verse 19 corresponds with the words “all mankind” in verse 18, and the construction even as... thus also in verse 19 carries forward the consequently as... thus also construction of verse 18. The numerous parallels between and within the two verses make the suggestion that Paul had not given sufficient thought to what he was saying incredible.

Paul is expounding the evangel. He is showing us why it is called the well-message of God. He is not saying that while Adam did something that affected everyone, what Christ did affects a lesser group of people, who nevertheless are many, but not so many as those affected by Adam. He has not begun an argument only to discover it makes him say more than he wanted to say, yet plowing ahead with it, nevertheless.

Enough of that! Abel and the apostle John are just as much part of the many who were constituted sinners because of Adam as Cain and Judas, and Cain and Judas are just as much part of the many who shall be constituted righteous as the faithful Abel and the beloved disciple of our Lord. They have all been constituted sinners because of Adam, and, while it certainly will not be at the same

All shall be Just

All shall be Just because of Christ. That is what Paul is saying. And that is what he means to say.

CONSTITUTED

The ruling verb in Romans 5:19 is translated in most English versions either by the word “made” or the word “constituted.” It is not that “make” is entirely misleading, but it best fits another Greek word, and fails to convey certain nuances of the Greek word, kathisēmi. A survey of the usage of the Greek word in Scripture is helpful. Its elements are DOWN-STAND. It is generally used in the sense of place into or appoint to a position (a place in which one stands, cf Rom.5:2 where our standing position is grace), such as a priest (Heb.7:28) or elder (Titus 1:5). But it implies more than appointment and envisions the carrying out of the functions of the position, or enjoying its values. That God constituted Joseph a governor indicates that Joseph was enabled to carry out the activities of rule. The seven men who were to be placed in a position of service were to be carefully chosen as those who would actually meet the need of the ecclesia at Jerusalem (Acts 5:3). In testifying that God places man over the works of His hands (Heb.2:7), Scripture foretells that which shall be truly realized in the future. We are to be given, not simply the position of righteousness, but the wherewithal of filling this position and experiencing its goodness. In other words, we will be righteous. That will be our state as well as our appointment.

This is what shall be. And it shall be so, not because we make it so, but because we shall be constituted to be so. The verb is future in tense and passive in voice. It is God Who does it, and He does it through the obedience of His Son. Here indeed is a matter of expectation of the glory of God (Rom.5:2).
EARLY PREPARATIONS

Romans 1:17 is the first specific expression of the well-message of God in this epistle, and Paul reiterates, in one way or another, what he says there as he proceeds. Sometimes, as in Romans 3:24 and 5:8 he evangelizes with different terms, but in at least two cases, he uses the very words of 1:17. The first half of 1:17 is expanded thought by thought in 3:22. And the second half of 1:17, where the apostle cites Habakkuk 2:4, is closely matched in wording by the second half of Romans 5:19. Both 1:17 and 5:19 tell of the glorious future of the “just” (the singular, just one, is used in 1:17 and the plural, just ones, in 5:19) based on the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ.

In addition, what the apostle writes in Romans 5:19 is bolstered by way of contrast with Romans 2:13 coupled with 3:10. No one can be just with God by works of law because no one is truly a doer of the law. The only way to righteousness is through the obedience of Christ. All in all, the important theme of righteousness is consistently developed and expanded from one passage to another in Romans.

GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS REVEALED

The wording of the evangel as given in Romans 3:22 recalls that of 1:17a, expounding the earlier declaration with added details. There are three principal parallels:

1:17 For in [the evangel] God’s righteousness is being revealed
3:22 Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets), yet a righteousness of God
1:17 out of faith
3:22 through Jesus Christ’s faith
1:17 for faith
3:22 for all, and on all who are believing

What we shall be

The evangel thus begins with God and centers on Christ and concludes with its significance for us. We note especially that the words “out of faith” in 1:17 are explained in 3:22 by the words “through Jesus Christ’s faith.” His faith, not ours, is the source (“out of”) and the channel (“through”) of God’s operation of justification. Our faith is in His faith.

THE JUST ONES

The two key thoughts of the second half of Romans 1:17 come before us in the second half of Romans 5:19. Those who shall be constituted righteous, shall be so because of the faithful obedience of Jesus Christ. They shall be living in a state of righteousness. Here again the parallel expressions can be juxtaposed with telling effect. What is said in the earlier passage is clarified in the latter:

1:17 Now the just one . . . shall be living
5:19 the many shall be constituted just [ones]
1:17 by [literally, out of] faith
5:19 through the obedience of the One

Paul’s citation of Habakkuk 2:4 supports what he had just written in 1:17a concerning the revelation of God’s righteousness coming out of the faith of Jesus Christ and directed to the faith of believers. It also paves the way for 5:19 where Paul exults in the way in which the faith-obedience of the One, Jesus Christ brings righteousness into our very being. We shall be living, and in our living we shall be standing before God as just ones; we shall be living in the state of righteousness.

TO BE JUST WITH GOD

But had not Paul said earlier that there was another way in which a person might become just with God? “For not the listeners to law are just with God, but the doers of the
law shall be justified” (Rom. 2:13). In the same context Paul directed attention to the revelation of the just judgment of God, in which God will be paying each one in accord with his acts: to those, indeed, who by endurance in good acts are seeking glory and honor and incorruption, life eonian...” (Rom. 2:5-7). Yet this is said within the whole context of Romans 1-8 in which Paul is evangelizing the evangel of God. Indeed, Paul radically qualifies these indicative statements when he reaches his conclusion concerning humanity as a whole, apart from the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus. “Not one is just—not even one” (Rom. 3:10). There are no doers of the law as it must be obeyed in order to be just with God. In God’s just judgment, no one at all will be found who has sufficiently endured in good acts, so as to receive eonian life.

Romans 2:13 and 3:10 stand as a foil to Romans 5:19. Again let us place these passages together, thought by thought, to make the contrast more vivid:

2:13 just with God... the doers of the law
5:19 constituted just... through the obedience of the One
3:10 not one is just—not even one
5:19 the many shall be constituted just

In expounding the evangel of God, Paul is not speaking of being righteous in a relative way. (It is in contrast to the evangel that the apostle refers, in Romans 5:7, to the rare possibility of someone dying for the sake of a man who is just by human standards.) The evangel itself tells of absolute righteousness, of righteousness which is effected by God’s righteousness and reflects God’s righteousness.

The evangel has been much diluted by failure to follow the interconnections of Paul’s thought. By works of law no flesh at all shall be justified in God’s sight. Through the obedience of Jesus Christ, every sinner shall be constituted just. This shall be realized in time, when death is abolished and God is All in all. And even before then, those who have accepted this evangel in faith and have already obtained the superabundance of God’s grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life in the oncoming eons. This all comes about in one way only, through the One, Jesus Christ.

CHRIST’S OBEDIENCE

Romans 5:19 tells us of the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ, as contrasted with the disobedience of the one, Adam. The one act of sinning of the one man brought the reign of death into the very constitution of all mankind. Day by day, moment by moment, tissue by tissue, cell by cell, we are all dying. Gradually at first (for most of us), but inevitably, in our dying state of infirmity and corruption, we are on the way to the state of death. But through the one act of obedience of Jesus Christ, the countless individuals who have descended from Adam and Eve shall be constituted righteous.

No matter how obedient a person may be in relation to humanity in general, the word “obedient” as applied to them falls far short of its meaning as applied to Christ. The faith and obedience of the most faithful believer does not rate comparison with that of our Lord, Who died for our sakes, while we were still sinners.

How blessed is Christ’s obedience. In Romans 3 it is called “Jesus Christ’s faith” (v.22) and “the faith [which He maintained] in [the shedding of] His blood” (v.25). Because of the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, in giving Himself for sinners, God is displayed as the just Justifier, and sinners are brought into a state of righteousness. Ultimately, all will enjoy these effects of perfect obedience.

Imagine, if you will, the results if His obedience needed to be supplemented by our own efforts. No, rather let us believe what the evangel declares is so.
This well-message concerning the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is no pie-in-the-sky scheme for health and riches, but a message of righteousness and life already gained through the obedience of our Lord.

We remember the account of the Shunammite woman, whose only son, a gift of God, died. Summoned by a messenger, the prophet sent her the message, “Is all well with you? Is all well with your husband? Is all well with the child?” And she said, “All is well” (2 Kings 4:26). She had the viewpoint of the evangel. She could do nothing, and she did not try to do anything except to turn to one who was a type of Christ.

It is written that when Elisha came to her, “he closed the door about the two of them and prayed to Yahweh. Then he got up and lay on the child and placed his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, his palms on his palms. As he lay prone on him, the boy’s flesh became warm” (2 Kings 4:32-34).

I do not know all that is pictured in this tender scene. But I believe it was a very personal matter when Christ died for me and for you. He closed the door of this mortal life about us, about Himself and me, about Himself and you, about Himself and each sinner individually, looking to His God and Father in faith and obedience. We died together with Him and were entombed together with Him, so that we would be roused together and be living together with Him, constituted righteous.

In Romans 5 we have concentrated on the evangel as it speaks concerning God’s Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Paul will continue this viewpoint of superabounding grace for two more verses, and then he will bring these details of our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection into our lives in chapter 6.

D.H.H.
The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

This book traces the divine function of evil (whatever is harmful or destructive) from its inception to its consummation, by presenting scriptural solutions to the various long-debated questions concerning God and His sovereignty.

As one of its subjects, it probes and takes issue with the commonly accepted explanation that Satan, and not God, is responsible for evil. To quote the book’s author: “Almost all of us are shortsighted. We see the judgments, but fail to recognize that they are only part of God’s way with mankind, that they are definitely not an end. We confuse the going with the goal. Judgment is God’s strange work. He uses it as a preparation toward a glorious consummation.”

The message in this book is especially valuable to us in these days of doubt and distress, to lead men to rely on and rest in God alone.


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EDITORIAL

“For the saving grace of God made its advent to all humanity, training us that, disowning irreverence and worldly desires, we should be living sanely and justly and devoutly in the current eon, anticipating that happy expectation, even the advent of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gives Himself for us . . .” (Titus 2:11-14).

If we can be living sanely and justly and devoutly in this current eon, it is truly a blessing. What is required of us for this to be so? It comes by means of the anticipation of our happy expectation, but this is not a matter of requirement. It is a favor; for expectation is one of the three “greater graces” which remain as gifts of God in the present era (cf 1 Cor.12:31; 13:13).

In accord with Paul’s evangel, our expectation is an anticipation of happiness. It stands in strong contrast to the present eon, even to the events at its conclusion when the indignation of God will come upon the sons of stubbornness (Eph.5:6). The days are wicked, but the message of grace which we are believing directs our thoughts and behavior in such a way as to “reclaim” the era and fill us with songs in our hearts of praise and thanksgiving to our God and Father (Eph.5:15-21).

Concerning our expectation, Paul always spoke positively. When the Thessalonians were alarmed because of current events all about them, and in view of the dark and distressful days prophesied in association with Christ’s return to set up His kingdom on the earth, he reaffirmed that fact, but added this remarkable word of expectation for us:

“God did not appoint us to indignation, but to the pro-
curing of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who
died for our sakes, that, whether we may be watching or
drowsing, we should be living at the same time together
with Him. Wherefore, console one another and edify one
the other, according as you are doing also” (1 Thess.5:9-11).

Then in his second letter he added:
“Now we ought to be thanking God always concerning you,
brethren, beloved by the Lord, seeing that God prefers you
from the beginning for salvation, in holiness of the spirit
and faith in the truth, into which He also calls us through
our evangel, for the procuring of the glory of our Lord
Jesus Christ. Consequently, then, brethren, stand firm,
and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us,
whether through word or our epistle. Now may our Lord
Jesus Christ Himself, and God, our Father, Who loves us,
and is giving us an eonian consolation and a good expec-
tation in grace, be consoling your hearts and establish you
in every good work and word” (2 Thess.2:13-17).

In this present issue of our magazine we reprint three
articles by A. E. Knoch, focused especially on the glori-
ous change that will occur when we are vivified in Christ’s
presence. The first of these is excerpted and edited from
a longer exposition entitled, “The Resurrection in Paul’s
Perfection Epistles,” appearing in our January 1937 num-
ber (volume 28, pages 13-25). The other two complete the
series entitled “The Mission of Mankind,” and were origi-
nally printed in four installments: in volume 36, pages 163-
172 and 217-225, and in volume 37, pages 41-48 and 85-96.

How fitting it is that it was in light of this expectation
of our future bodily change for adaptation to our celestial
calling, that Paul wrote:

“So that, my beloved brethren, become settled, unmov-
able, superabounding in the work of the Lord always, being aware
that your toil is not for naught in the Lord” (1 Cor.15:58).

D.H.H.
THE EXPECTATION RESERVED FOR US

The expression, “the expectation [which is] reserved for you in the heavens” (Col.1:5), combined with the opening strain of the Ephesian epistle, “every spiritual blessing among the celestials” (Eph.1:3) is the crowning and concluding glory of the secret of the resurrection (cf 1 Cor. 15:51). We have heard of a tryst with our Lord in the air (1 Thess.4:13-18), and of the change of our bodies from soilish to celestial (1 Cor.15:49-53), but until we come to Paul's perfection epistles of Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, we have heard nothing of the place for which such a body prepares us, nor of the company for which it fits us. We must remember that much that is heavenly in character will be on the earth. The saints in Israel will have a heavenly home in the celestial Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22; Rev.21:2), but it descends out of heaven and is on the earth. The city descends to them. We ascend to our allotment. But it was not until the present administration was fully revealed, after Israel's temporary but definite setting aside, that Paul could come out clearly and make known the great truth that our future is not on earth but in the heavens, among the celestials.

Our future is inseparably linked to that of God's Anointed. Little do we realize the wonder of that word, “And thus shall we always be together with the Lord!” (1 Thess.4:17). When that was written God had not revealed everything concerning Him to His people. They knew little besides His terrestrial glories. But God had a secret surprise con-
cerning Christ which He reserved within His own heart. It was always His will to head up the universe in Christ, but only a small section of it was made known to mankind. The prophets had made it plain that He will be Head over all the earth when Israel is redeemed. But they did not give the slightest hint that He would be Head of the universe when an elected group out of the nations will be glorified. This is the secret made known in the opening of Ephesians (1:9-12). Paul, as an Israelite, would have had his place on earth. But God, Who operates the universe in accord with the counsel of His will, arbitrarily changed His allotment from earth to heaven. Who else were associated with Him in this adjustment? They are designated as those who are in a state of prior expectancy in the Christ (Eph.1:12).

THE PRIOR EXPECTANCY

No better phrase could be invented for those among the Circumcision who had received the revelations of Thessalonians and Corinthians, as well as all others who had part in the expectation which they reveal. The Authorized Version translation, “who first trusted” is untenable from every standpoint. The Revisers’ version, “who before hoped” is very much better. The word has no reference to trust or have confidence in. The Authorized Version rendered the simple noun elpis hope fifty-three times, and only once faith. The verb elpizō, alas, they have rendered hope only thirteen times and trust eighteen, thus confusing it with peithō, which really denotes trust or have confidence in. The special word used to designate the pre-expectants occurs only in this passage, and is in a grammatical form which denotes a state, not an action. Paul, and those with him, came upon the scene much too late to either trust or hope before the twelve. But, in Thessalonians, Paul reveals an expectation the fulfillment of which will precede that of the Circumcision. It is those who have this expecta-

Our Present Conduct

tion who will be associated with the celestial Headship of Christ, just as those who hold the expectation which will be fulfilled later will be with Him in His terrestrial reign.

ROUSE! A DROWSY ONE

Our future resurrection, rousing, and vivification is hardly mentioned in the perfection epistles, but the resurrection, or rather the rousing, of Christ, is made the basis of our walk. Once, indeed, we are urged to rouse and rise from among the dead (Eph.5:14), but this is figurative also, and is applied, not to the future fact, but to our present conduct. As is to be expected, Philippians develops this thought fully, yet it is found in Ephesians and Colossians as well.

The relation of the resurrection to “the mystery” is clearly defined in its categorical statement in Ephesians 3:6,7. In spirit, the nations are to be . . . joint partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the evangel of which Paul was the dispenser. All of the truth which we have hitherto considered, in Thessalonians, and in Corinthians, is ours now on an equal footing with the election out of Israel. We are joint partakers of it. These things themselves are not the secret. The promise was well known. But now it is changed in character in that all priority on the part of the Circumcision vanishes, little as there was of it in this connection. Ephesians reveals no new promise, but incorporates that given to Paul, at the same time completely severing us from that of the Circumcision.

In Philippians the apostle refers to our expectation by another characteristic expression. He calls it an out-resurrection—“if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead” (3:11). The character of the epistle and the context show that this “attaining” was a matter of present personal experience. He wishes to anticipate in this life what will be his in the
resurrection. This expression is another way of putting the fact that we have a prior expectancy, but the comparison is even broader. Our expectation is compared with that of the Circumcision, who also have an expectation. The out-resurrection is a comparison with all the dead. In this the Circumcision will have a part, for they also will leave the unbelieving dead behind. All who will be raised from among the dead, from our Lord onward, will appropriate Christ and His righteousness and power, and have a knowledge of Him which Paul desired to attain in His present walk and experience. The out-resurrection is but another way of denoting the second class in the vivification of all, those who are Christ’s at His presence (1 Cor.15:23). Only those in the out-resurrection have eonian life and reign with Christ during the eons of the eons. This is not limited to His body, but embraces all who are His, though Paul refers to that phase of it which we alone will know.

The positive side of this great truth is presented in Ephesians and Colossians. Not only are we to live as though resurrected from among the dead, but God “vivifies us together . . . and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus . . .” (Eph.2:5,6). This is our expectation in fact, yet our anticipation in spirit. It is a timeless truth whose power should transform our lives long before we possess immortality. In Ephesians the “together” is collective, with the Circumcision who receive this grace, and it is in Christ. Colossians unites us with Him personally. Entombed together, we were roused together also through faith in the operation of God, Who rouses Him from among the dead, and vivifies us together jointly with Him (Col.2:12,13).

We are never said to be raised with Christ, or to be risen with Him, as the Authorized Version renders it, for it is not our bodies which respond to the truth but our spirits, and it affects our experience, hence is compared with the rous-

We are Awaiting our Saviour

...ing of our souls. This most powerful spring of godly living is used as the basis of the opening exhortation in the hortatory half of the Colossian epistle (3:1-5): “If, then, you were roused together with Christ, be seeking that which is above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Be disposed to that which is above, not to that on the earth, for you died, and your life is hid together with Christ in God. Whenever Christ, our Life, should be manifested, then you also shall be manifested together with Him in glory. Deaden, then, your members that are on the earth . . . .”

Here we see the fruit of our celestial expectation in a great change in our attitude toward the things of earth even as its realization will change our bodies. In anticipation we are seated among the celestials, but we walk as those whose allotment is above. It should loose us from the shackles of earth ever as our vivification in the future will free us from the fetters of gravitation.

Our Heavenly Realm

The most extended account of our future expectation to be found in Paul’s perfection epistles is at the end of the third chapter of Philippians. He laments some whose conduct does not conform to our celestial calling, who to the terrestrial are disposed. For our realm has all along been in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory; in accord with the operation which enables Him to subject to Himself even the universe (Phil.3:18-21). This is in absolute accord with the secret revealed to the Corinthians, adjusted and amplified to the transcendent glories of the crowning secret of Paul’s latest revelation.

Neither Thessalonians nor Corinthians took us into the heavens or gave us a legal residence above. Thessalonians took us to the air and left us there. First Corinthians
hinted that there is a celestial body (15:40), and foretold our change. Here we have the completion of these unfinished unfoldings. We go to the air because that is on our way to the heavens, where we have our home. Our bodies will not only be changed to immortality and incorruptibility, but will be transfigured to accord with a celestial destiny. There is no single point of contrast in these gracious glimpses of our future. One step leads to the next in perfect sequence and accord. Each further unfolding included what had gone before. As all else, our blessed expectation went from glory to glory, each grander than before.

The same Paul who could say, “we, the living, who are surviving unto the presence of the Lord . . .” (1 Thess. 4:15), who could say, “we all, indeed, shall not be put to repose . . .” (1 Cor.15:51), he it is who says, in this, his latest revelation, “we are awaiting a Saviour also” (Phil.3:20). It is in the character of Saviour that Christ is coming to His celestial saints. Now we have bodies altogether unworthy of our heavenly destiny—weak, mortal, corruptible, earth-bound, humiliating. These we cannot take to our celestial home as they are, so He will transfigure them, as He alone can do, Who has the ability to bring the whole universe beneath His beneficent sway.

THE EXPECTATION OF HIS CALLING

After expounding to us the universal headship of Christ, the apostle begins a most marvelous prayer for us who are of the nations (Eph.1:15-23). This new faith, which made the nations the peer of Israelites in an allotment unutterably higher than that which they will have upon the earth, called forth his thanks and the special request that God, as the Father glorious, may be giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in order to make it known to us. He would have our hearts’ eyes enlightened, first of all, that we may perceive the expectation of His calling (Eph.1:18). Just

A Superlatively Supreme Prospect

as the first hint of present truth came through the revelation of a new expectation, so now the first part of the new faith for the nations (which the apostle would have us grasp) is the expectation for which God calls us. Only in the light of this glory may we be enabled to realize the grandeur of this calling, for it is hidden now, and will be, until Christ appears.

Incorruption, glory, power—such are the splendid excellences of the resurrection body (1 Cor.15:42,43). And here, in this supreme revelation of our future fate, these are repeated and magnified. Paul prays that we may realize the riches of the glory, and the transcendent greatness of the power which is for believers. Our bodies are sown in dishonor and roused in glory. So also our present lot is one of humiliation. But our future allotment will not simply be glorious. That would not be too strong a term for the allotment of Israel on the earth. Ours will by far transcend it. We will have riches of glory. So also with power. Great indeed will be the power for the saints in the Kingdom, but ours will not be merely great, but surpassingly, transcendently great. Our prospect is superlatively supreme. We were last and least. We shall be first and foremost.

It would be practically impossible to convey an adequate idea of the power which is ours apart from the fact that Christ has already preceded us. His exaltation is an exhibition of the strength which will raise us to the empyrean. It is impossible for the human mind to imagine a display of power superior to that which has operated in the Christ, rousing Him from among the dead and seating Him at God’s right hand. Who could be weaker than the despised Nazarene, crucified, forsaken, dead? And who, in all the universe, is so powerful as the Executive of the Deity? There can be no greater sum than the difference between zero and infinity, nor can there be any vaster difference in power than that between the dead Saviour and
our exalted Lord. Yet such is the only example which ade-
quately conveys a conception of the power which God will
use to exalt the members of the body of His Christ.

CHRIST’S UNIVERSAL HEADSHIP

The exaltation of Christ is no longer confined to earthly
dignities. These are doubtless included, but are not so
much as mentioned. Universal supremacy is His! Every
form of intermediate rule is subordinate to Him. From
the highest of all, probably symbolized by the twenty-four
elders in His Unveiling (Rev.4:4), down to the least of the
messengers, and every name of influence, all are placed
beneath His feet. We do not share in this administration
yet, but in the eons to come, just as Israel, as the bride of
the Lambkin, will share His terrestrial honors, and admin-
ister the Kingdom on the earth, so will we partake of His
celestial dignities, and administer the realms above. His
universal headship will then be exercised by the ecclesia
which is His body, His complement in the completing of
all things (cf Eph.1:23).

Earth is far from being the whole of God’s creation, nor
are its denizens all of His intelligent creatures. We have not
been given any definite idea as to the size or population of
the universe, for it is probably so vast that human words
would fail and human minds be utterly inadequate to com-
prehend its infinitude. So that much, indeed, remains of
rule after the earth has been made subject to His scepter.
Our future realm, our sovereignty, seems boundless in
extent, for there is naught except the earth outside of it.

With a master hand and heart God works out His won-
derful display on the black background of human misery
and sin. This alone can adequately set forth the death-
less splendor which will be our glorious heritage in the
eons of the eons.

A. E. Knoch
OUR CELESTIAL CHANGE

A serious difficulty arises in reference to man’s mission to the celestials. *His present body is not at all capable of carrying it out.* It is not adapted to any environment except the surface of the earth. When the Corinthians doubted the resurrection, this seems to have been the chief stumbling block. “How are the dead being roused, and with what body are they coming?” (1 Cor.15:35). The objector probably had no thought of heaven, but it furnished an opening for explaining the secret of 1 Corinthians 15:51, that those who received his ministry would not reappear as they had been in this life, but would enjoy a great and glorious transformation. This would take place when Christ calls them back from death at His presence, when He comes to the air for His beloved saints.

For Israel there is no need of much change except immunity from death. For the celestial saints, that is not enough. With a body of flesh and blood they would suffer intensely from a celestial environment. Those who talk glibly of “going to heaven,” should not think only of the golden harps, but of the possible pain and distress which is the lot of human beings who ascend to a great height above their normal surroundings in the lower regions of the earth.

THREE SPHERES OF CREATION

In meeting this question, the apostle appeals to the facts of nature (1 Cor.15:36-49). He points to three distinct spheres, the plants, the animals, and the heavenly bodies, and draws a different lesson from each. He calls
attention to the seeds of plants, the flesh of men and beasts and flyers and fishes, and to the bodies of celestial beings. The terrestrial bodies differ from the glory of the celestial. These have many degrees of glory, as shown in the sun, the moon, and the stars. Then this is further elaborated and applied to the resurrection, and the marvelous change which will transform our corrupt, dishonorable, infirm, soulish, soilish frames into incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual, celestial bodies, fit for our high mission among the heavenly hosts.

RESURRECTION, Rousing and Vivification

Three distinct phases of our return from death to life are presented in the Scriptures, each of which is associated with a distinct feature of man's constitution. Resurrection is related especially to the body, rousing to the soul, and vivification to the spirit. Of course they are so closely involved with one another that one usually implies the rest of them.

Now in 1 Corinthians 15 Paul discusses our future change in detail as it affects the spirit, the soul, and the body. To each of these He returns. He appeals to the plant, the animal, and the mineral kingdom for illustrations. Indeed He ranges over the whole universe in his efforts to clarify this great change. The vivification of the spirit is explained by means of plants (1 Cor.15:36-38,43,44). The rousing of the soul is shown by facts regarding the flesh of animals (39,45,46). The resurrection of the body is illustrated by appeal to celestial as well as terrestrial bodies (40,41,47-49). Each one of these is worthy of prolonged study, for they foretell an experience in store for us, which is most welcome and beyond everything that we can think or imagine. It will turn all our sorrow into joy, all our heartache into jubilation.

by Seeds and Plants

VIVIFICATION BY DEATH

The oldest life forms on the earth's surface, so far as I am aware, are plants. I once saw a tree in the high Sierras of California, which, so far as I could determine, dates back as far as the deluge, about four thousand years. Plants come much nearer to incorruptibility and immortality than animals. But this is not the illustration used to explain the resurrection. This tree has had no need of vivification, for it has never died. It is so vast in its proportions that it contains enough lumber to build a whole village.

All life, even that of plants, is due to spirit, and can only spring from spirit. But the mode of transmission in most plants differs from that in animals. In the latter the seed gradually develops into a new individual. In the grains the kernel does not bring forth another kernel, but produces a whole plant, with foliage and flowers, much more wonderful in form and appearance than itself. The point here seems to be that the vitality, the spirit of the seed is transmitted to a habitation quite different from that which it left, even if it is the same spirit. The great change is in the two bodies that the one spirit receives. A grain remains a grain until its form perishes. If its outward form does not decay and die, the plant does not spring up.

The usual translation of verse 36, "that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die," seems to suggest that only dead seed can produce a new crop. But quite the opposite is true. Dead seed will only decay. It will bring forth nothing. It should read, "What you are sowing is not vivifying if it should not be dying." That is, the dying (not dead) seed imparts its life to the new plant. In the process of doing this, it must give up its own life. It loses its form and what is left of it decays. There is no return from death as with us. We are not pointed to plants as examples of vivification such as we will experience at the presence of Christ.
Seeds are simply *illustrations* of how the same spirit may be clothed with a body far more marvelous than the one which has decayed.

The comparison between the seeds of plants and ourselves is not immediately enforced, but is delayed a few lines, in which the flesh of animals on earth and the bodies of celestial spheres are also introduced (verses 39-41), in order to cover the soul and body as well as the spirit, which we have just discussed. That the seeds are once more the subject in verse 42 is evident from the resumption of the figure of *sowing*. Terrestrial flesh and celestial bodies are not *sown*. So long as this picture is used, we may be sure that the comparison is between the seed and the plant which springs from it and stresses the *spirit*. Yet this is also linked to the next comparison, which concerns the soul, because our soulish bodies will be roused a *spiritual* body. It is important to remember that, although spirit and soul are often in view in this discussion, the dominating theme is the *resurrection body*.

As the seed in the soil goes to corruption, so it is with our mortal bodies. They are, so to speak, planted in the soil, and are returning to it. While the seed is left to decay in the earth, the plant is thrusting its blade above the ground, its stalk is shooting upward, its foliage is spreading abroad, its flowers are scenting the air. What a contrast! So it is with the bodies which our spirits now inhabit, compared with that which shall be. Like the seed sown in the soil, our mortal frames are dying, disintegrating, returning to the soil, until the spirit leaves and returns to God Who gave it. But this same spirit, like the vital force of the plant, will vivify a body which will never die, which the least tinge of corruption will never touch. What a relief! What a joy! How unutterably thankful we will be! Our adoration of God will no longer be handicapped by a corrupting corpse, but, rather, that by-gone experience will enable us to enjoy it to the full, and respond to the grace of which it is an expression.

**THE BODY THAT SHALL BE**

Our present fleshly frame is sown in dishonor. It will be roused in glory (1 Cor.15:43a) Humiliation was God’s aim in giving us the bodies which we now possess. Its very grace and beauty, when in its prime, only emphasizes the degradation to which it sinks as its vitality vanishes, its bloom fades, and its features are disfigured. Teeth decay, hearing becomes dull, sight becomes dim, and the bodily functions fail. Senility is a sad sight, indeed, unless we see in it a God-given contrast to the glory which is in store for us in the resurrection. Even to be rid of these inglorious signals of decay and death would be a consummation devoutly to be wished. But that is far from fulfilling the expectation held out to us. Even the glory of Adam’s sinless form, doubtless clothed in a luminous robe of light, cannot compare with the celestial splendor that will be ours in that day.

It is sown in infirmity; it is roused in power (verse 43b). How helpless is a babe of the human race! Perhaps no other living thing is so dependent as a newborn child. And even when it reaches maturity, how pitifully puny man is when matched with the forces of nature! And how soon the strength of the mighty leaves them! A few score years and most men have spent their vigor. Work becomes a burden. Steps begin to totter. Backs begin to bend. Infirmity makes life an intolerable load, in case disease or violence has not cut short our career. All this would reflect seriously on the Creator if it were the object and end of His dealings with mankind. But it only enhances His fame, when we see that infirmity is merely the foil for the display of the future power that will be ours in resurrection. Then, by comparison, even the professional strong men of
Today will be puny puppets. Then the work that wearied us once will be like a welcome relaxation.

It is sown a soul body, it is roused a spiritual (verse 44). We may not be able to grasp this contrast as easily as the previous ones, but here we are given a clue which will lead us to see why our present bodies are corruptible and dishonorable and infirm. The life principle, spirit, is not paramount. Instead, it unites with the soil to form the soul, or sensation, and this takes the first place in controlling the body. As this is the principal point in the next discussion, we will not go into it further here. It will be much easier to understand after we have studied the place of the flesh in our present bodies.

Soul and Flesh

Having shown by the illustration of the seed that the same spirit may vitalize two different kinds of bodies, such as a bare kernel and a plant with branches, leaves, flowers and fruit, when the one first goes to corruption, Paul now turns to the soul, and appeals to the animal world to illustrate quite a different aspect of the return from death (1 Cor. 15:39). There was no change in spirit, unless it be in quantity, in the plant. The change was in the structure, the body of the life form. But the soul of animals, being in the blood, is closely connected with the flesh. Superficially, one might expect that the different bodily forms or shapes be pointed out, which adapt each animal to its surroundings, the fish for the water and especially the bird for the air. But we will not receive wings in resurrection! The change goes deeper than that. It is our flesh that needs a renewal.

In order to be able to grasp the greatest change in resurrection we will need to be well grounded in the part played by the flesh in man as he now is. The lack of this knowledge has led to much misapprehension of man's past. It

by Flesh and Blood

is essential if we wish to apprehend his future. The flesh is the villain in the tragedy of human history. To it is due the failure and futility which has characterized his existence hitherto. It is impossible for us to realize this apart from God's revelation. Even then much has been missed, and believers themselves are tempted to try and improve the incorrigible flesh. It was not until Paul's epistles were penned, and we hid the final verdict condemning the flesh, that its true character and function could be understood. But when once we learn this, then we can see its real role from the very beginning.

Various Forms of Flesh

All flesh is not the same, however (verse 39). This is vital to our theme. We can see this in nature. Not only is there human flesh, but the various forms of animal life have flesh also. From these we may learn the needful lesson that all flesh is adapted to its sphere. The birds may fly in the air and the fishes swim in the sea, but woe to the bird that seeks the depths of the ocean or the fish that would fly in the empyrean! Both would die in a comparatively short time, because their flesh is not fashioned for such an element. Man may dive beneath the water and jump into the air for a short space of time. He may prolong his stay by artificial means for a longer period. But his flesh is so constituted that it cannot live anywhere except on the surface of the earth, for which it was made.

Flesh and Blood Go to Corruption

Flesh and blood is not able to enjoy an allotment in the kingdom of God because it is corruptible (1 Cor. 15:50). Flesh without blood tends to disintegrate, decompose, decay, putrefy, and return to the soil from which it came. It is by a constant renewal of elements from the soil through the blood that living flesh is kept from total
decomposition or corruption, such as would take place if it were severed from the body altogether, and there were no blood to replace the waste, and repair the tissue. This is what takes place at death. The beginning of decomposition commences long before life ceases. That has been going on from the start, even before birth. Before death it is counteracted by the assimilation of food and oxygen in healthy, youthful organisms, but to a diminishing degree as age decreases the vitality.

Let us repeat this important fact in other words. Soil from the ground, formed into an organism by the hand of God, would soon return to the soil without blood to bring further supplies in the form of food, as well as oxygen from the air to replace the losses due to the disintegration which results from the life processes. If we take a piece of flesh which is cut off from these supplies and take no measures to hinder it from spoiling, it will soon decompose and disappear, with very disagreeable accompaniments. This simple fact in nature, which all men have observed, gives the word flesh, its special meaning and usage in God’s word. It is the corruptible part of man, often miscalled his “sinful nature,” and other misleading terms. When mankind is called flesh, by the figure near association, it does not mean merely that he is composed of organic soil, or that he has a body, but that he is corruptible and mortal.

METABOLISM

The process of building and demolishing the bodies of living creatures is called metabolism by medical men, and is divided into anabolism (up-casting) and katabolism (down-casting). It is, in effect, living and dying at the same time. If the flesh were not continually supplied with fresh substance and energy by means of the blood, it would gradually waste away until all of it had returned to inorganic soil. It would go to corruption. The blood is needed, Adam and Eve were Mortal

not merely to build and to vitalize, but to repair the damage which is constantly occurring. This is what is meant by the phrase “flesh and blood” (verse 50). First of all, flesh continually inclines to decompose, yet is hindered by the blood, which reaches every part and counteracts decay.

ADAM AND EVE

This system of flesh and blood may last indefinitely, so long as it functions perfectly. It seems that Adam and Eve continued to keep themselves nourished and healthy by means of the fruits of Eden’s garden. Even though their flesh was the same as ours (for we inherit ours from them), it was renewed as fast as it was broken down, so, for practical purposes, displayed none of the signs of decay.

The repair was so persistent and perfect that the measure of the flesh’s decomposition was made up by the continual assimilation. But the moment that they ate a substance which, instead of repairing and restoring the flesh, acted rather to cooperate with the latter in its tendency to decay, then the flesh was no longer restrained as it had been, and a gradual process of corruption, or dying, changed the course of life toward death, and immediately dimmed the glory of primeval perfection.

Adam, in Eden, was not immortal in any sense. That he could die is evident from the fact that he did, eventually. That he was not immune from death even before he sinned seems indicated by the presence of the tree of life in the midst of the garden (Gen.2:9). Of this he could freely eat, though there was no need. As a result he was not dying. He was not undergoing the process of death, which characterizes all humanity since his expulsion from Eden, and will continue until the tree is restored in the future (Ezek. 47:12; Rev.22:2). The immortality of the soul, or of the spirit, or of the body, or of the whole man, is contrary to God’s Word from beginning to end. Sin and death are nec-
nessary for training man for his mission in the universe, as well as for his own knowledge of God, and His grace and love. Therefore Adam was made mortal and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was put within his reach, so that, through the discipline of death, he might be prepared for his place in the universe.

That the tree of life was not only a food, but also a medicine, is clear from later scriptures, and is intimated by Adam’s expulsion from the garden. Even after he had offended, he was driven forth lest he take of the tree of life and live for the eon. The tree that he did not need before he sinned could have kept him from death afterward. In the next eon, when Christ is the great Priest of His people, the tree will be a panacea for the ills of the holy nation. Its fruit will be for food, but its leaves will heal them of their diseases (Ezek.47:12). In the new earth its curative power will be extended to the nations. That is why death will be no more (Rev.21:4). It is not that the nations will be immortal, or that the dying process has been done away with. That does not come until the consummation, when death is abolished (1 Cor.15:26). Were there no tree of life to arrest the ravages of the last enemy, death would still reap its grim harvest in the last eon.

THE TREE OF LIFE

There was an antidote for the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. All that Adam needed to do was to take of the tree of life, and the dying process, which had begun in him, would have been arrested. To those who are not in God’s confidence it seems strange that He should have planted a poisonous tree in the midst of the garden, even if He did warn Adam not to eat of it. Yet it is stranger still that, after planting the tree of life, He would not let Adam eat of it in order to counteract the evil that had been done. And not only so, but why does He not give

is Necessary in the future

us such a tree today, when it is so sorely needed? In the coming eons He will not withhold this boon from His people, and they will find relief from the weakness and the corruption which is inherent in the flesh, by eating the fruit of the tree of life (Ezek.47:12, Rev.22:2).

The setting of the scene in Eden was entirely contrary to the teaching of theology. To make it agree we would be forced to exchange the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden for the tree of life. If God wanted men to be immortal at that time He would have put this tree within man’s easy reach and taken the fatal tree away entirely.

Moreover, why were the cherubim with their flaming sword not used to bar the serpent out of Eden before Adam sinned, rather than Adam after his transgression? Or why not to keep Adam away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, rather than from the tree of life?

CELESTIAL BODIES

It is significant that there is a change from flesh to bodies, when celestial creatures are discussed (1 Cor.15:40). The difference is defined as one of glory. For us, indeed, the flesh as we now know it, disappears in the celestial glory, when it is changed by His presence. Indeed, whatever glory our present bodies of flesh and blood may have in its proper sphere on the earth, it would no longer be glory in comparison with that above. We are not physically fit for any other environment except the terrestrial. The process, which slowly brings us down to the grave on earth, would be almost instantaneous if we should be transported into the heavens, above the atmosphere, deprived of oxygen and warmth. Heaven is supposed to be a place of utmost pleasure. But what little we know by experience of the upper regions above the earth would lead us to make it a scene of swift suffering and sudden decease.
But even if men could manage to overcome the lack of oxygen and the cold, how long could they live at a distance from the soil? This frame of ours is a soiling body, and cannot exist for long apart from the plant-producing ground. Even on the earth’s surface he must often labor hard and sweat heavily to extract a living from the sod, in accord with God’s curse upon the ground. It would not take long for hunger to drive a heavenly adventurer down to dine, for his flesh would soon fade away without constant replacement.

PLACES OR BEINGS

But it is doubtful if the term “celestial,” or _on_-heavenly, refers to the upper regions of earth’s atmosphere. It seems rather to denote that which, or those who, are _on_ the heavenly luminaries, such as the moon, the sun, or the stars, for these are mentioned (I Cor.15:41). The much-debated question as to whether these are inhabited has not been settled by scientists, but the Scriptures seem to clearly teach that there are created beings _on_ the heavenly lights. First, however, let us note that these are never referred to as _human_ beings, sons of Adam. What little we know of nature confirms the thought that mankind not only does not, but cannot, live _on_ the orbs of space.

The Greek term _epouranios_ is indefinite. It may refer to things or persons. So far it seems that translators have preferred to add the word _places_. But a study of the Ephesian epistle will lead us to see that this is far from satisfactory if it is intended to exclude living, intelligent beings. Such passages as, “may be made known to the sovereignties and the authorities among the celestial, through the ecclesia,”

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1. Our rendering “among the celestials” accords with the fact that English idiom usually demands “among” rather than “in” with the plural.

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Confined to the Earth

the multifarious wisdom of God” (Eph.3:10), clearly refer to the dwellers in the “heavenly places.” The word “place” (which is not in the Greek, but is added by the translators for the sake of English idiom), puts a limit to the thought which is not in the original. The sense of “beings” is included in the rendering “among the celestials.”

During an early epoch in my life, ere I was called by God, I was preparing myself to be an astronomer, so made an effort to acquaint myself with the nearer luminaries, especially the moon, for I had only a small telescope. Long continued observation of its different phases, especially of that intermediate zone where darkness and the light meet, as well as the crater-like spots, gave me much to think about, and convinced me that it was not fit for human habitation. The shadows of the mountains are exceedingly sharp, which seems to show that there is no atmosphere worth mentioning. They looked like the shadows in a vacuum. In that case it is probably very hot where the sun shines and very cold in the shade. I noticed this even on a high mountain on earth. I held out my palm to the sun, which burned on one side, while it was cold on the other.

The sun is generally too bright to bear observation through a small telescope, so I studied photographs, and observed sun spots through dark glasses. Once I made a considerable journey to get the best possible view of a total eclipse of the sun. When the moon was fully centered on its disc, the corona could be seen, long streamers of flame reaching out on all sides. The sun’s surface seems to be in the greatest turmoil. The main fact that emerged was this: that human beings cannot exist in its terrific heat for a moment. If we can’t even gaze at the sun unless it is totally eclipsed, except through dark glasses, and when we are at a vast distance, how could we live in the midst of such a turbulent lake of fire?

The other heavenly orbs were too far away for my tele-
scope. I could see faint rings around Saturn, but not clear enough to form any conclusions about it. But from photographs and the descriptions of those who have made painstaking observations, I am convinced that none are really fit for human habitation, unless, possibly, the planet Mars. Venus is too near the sun and so cloudy that we would be parboiled, perhaps, before we could reach its surface. The planets at a greater distance from the sun than our earth would probably be too cold. Beings constituted as we are, who must confine themselves within a narrow range of temperature, cannot even live in all regions of our own planet, let alone the outer realms of space, or the heavenly bodies with conditions vastly different from those on earth.

Of the stars we can say very little positively, as science is too theoretical to be a safe guide. But it seems evident that the solar system is a model for others in the universe and that the countless luminaries that can be seen by means of the photographic plate are the same as our sun, and may have satellites corresponding to it. I am convinced that we are not called to selfishly luxuriate in the “heaven” of orthodoxy, but to be God’s representatives to all the orbs of space. It will be our more blessed privilege to give, rather than to get. It has seemed most significant to me that, when I first made up my mind to really study the Bible to see what it was all about, I started with Genesis and was stalled for very wonder at the statement: He made the stars also. To speak so of the myriads of mighty monsters in the infinite field of the heavens, was beyond man. These few words kindled my interest in the Bible, and in the stars of which it speaks so simply.

Since then I have come to know God and the special mission which He has given the ecclesia which is the Christ’s body. We are blessed with every spiritual blessing among the celestials. Our home is not on earth, but in the heavens. Some day we shall visit our near neighbors, the moon and Mars, and doubtless we will be able to live upon the sun and any of its satellites. Moreover, we will reach out to the stars, and spread the knowledge of God’s name on every member of the milky way as well as on Sirius and Orion, from the North Star to the Southern Cross. Once we grasp the grace that is ours in Christ Jesus, and the glory of spreading His fame to all the universe, the stars are transformed from strange pin points of light into the most magnificent field of human endeavor ever granted to any of Adam’s race.

I have lived much of my life in a clime where the stars come close to earth. I have lain for hours on my back on a roof-top in Jerusalem, simply soaking in the stars, which seemed so much nearer than in the northern zones where most of my friends reside. In the murky north it is not so easy to understand Yahweh’s word to Abraham, for the stars are usually obscured, and only the greatest lights are always visible. But in Palestine, without a glass or telescope, on a clear night, the sight is bewildering, and no one would care to count their number. Of course those of minor magnitude are not visible to the naked eye, and a patient photographic plate will see many millions more. This will be our parish! To declare God’s name to the denizens of this indescribable domain have we been “ordained!”

The greatest glory of earth will be the holy city, new Jerusalem, with its vast extent, and its enduring decorations of gold and precious gems. But this terrestrial glory will not compare with the celestial magnificence. The city, so wide and broad and high, sinks into insignificance before the immeasurable reaches of interstellar space, and the immensity of some of the stars.

There, vast audiences are waiting for the message that we bring, which we will announce, not only by word of mouth, but by our very presence and overwhelming glory, heightened by the background of human sin and enmity.
to God, as witnessed by the pages of earth’s history and sealed by the cross of Christ.

Since the airplane has been able to soar to inhuman heights, it has become abundantly clear that no man can live many miles above the earth. I have climbed mountains, much lower than this, and found breathing difficult, and sustained effort exhausting. High fliers must be provided with oxygen masks and heating equipment. Compared with other stellar distances, man can rise above the soil only a most minute measure. His present flesh binds him to the earth with a very short rope. He is a prisoner, confined within a narrow layer of air just above the surface of his habitance.

I am quite certain that the force of gravity, which we will call weight, would make it very awkward for us anywhere but on the surface of the earth. On the moon we might be mighty acrobats, yet on Jupiter we would be glued to the ground. But I do not need to prove this. Everyone of us knows that he has weight, and it takes quite an effort to lift one of our own size even a few feet from the ground. In our present bodies we certainly cannot jump from the earth even to the moon, our nearest neighbor, or to any other of the planets or the stars. We have a terrestrial body, not a celestial one.

How is it possible to overcome the force of gravity? Can our bodies be so changed as to lose all their weight? Just how they can be transformed we cannot tell, but there are indications all about us which give us a clue to the means. The clearest of all is a very simple experiment. Who, roughly speaking, can jump the highest? Why, the one who is the strongest, who has the most power. This is the key. Our present bodies are infirm because of their mortality. But mere muscular strength does not solve the problem. We are not fitted for any other environment, even under ideal conditions, and would need strength far in excess of the present.

**How Can we Ascend?**

Another illustration may help. We wish to offer an animal wholly to God. How can we send it aloft to the empyrean? In Hebrew it would be called an ascent offering. How did the priests send a heavy animal up to God? They changed its substance. Take an animal that cannot jump even its own height and apply power in the form of fire, so that it is resolved into gases, then these will ascend without effort seemingly, and all except a very small residue will float away above. The ashes that remain are nearly nothing in comparison with the weight of the beast. It would have been a tremendous task to carry the carcass up the sides of high Hermon or lofty Lebanon. In this simple fashion, however, almost all of it ascended as a restful odor to God.

The same thought is suggested by the action of the messenger of Yahweh, who left Manoah and his wife by ascending in the flame of the burning sacrifice (Judges 13:19,20). The point is that the force of gravity can be entirely nullified by giving the constituents of the body a different constitution. A diamond will sink in water, but soot, the very same substance, will float, and a carabolic gas will ascend to the sky. The flesh of a fish will float about in water, but, when eaten by a bird, will fly in the air. God gives the celestials a body that has no fear of fire, and that ascends without apparent effort to the empyrean. Of this nature will be the change of our terrestrial bodies when He comes. When we hear His shout and the dead are roused, then we will find ourselves able to sink upwards as it were, and meet the Lord in the air.

**CONCLUSION**

Man prides himself on being the most intelligent of earth’s denizens, yet he cannot answer the most elementary questions about himself. He does not know whence he came, what he is, or whither he is going. He gropes about in a London fog. His thinking and acting is based on igno-
rancence, conceit and selfishness. Even his highest efforts to benefit his fellows, economically, socially, politically, morally and religiously, unless based upon a recognition of God and His plans, are futile and doomed to failure, because they run counter to the current of His intention. Even the little light that man has is distorted. He is quite right in his yearning for immortality, but fearfully astray when he denies death in order to obtain it.

Once our heart sees clearly that the mission of mankind demands a period of preparation in which evil is the essential factor, how futile and offensive are all the efforts of men to avoid the sweat and tears and blood which is their lot! How pitiable is the pride that persists in making man the arbiter of his fate, the captain of his soul! How illusory are his dreams of happiness, how misleading the mirage of a new world with freedom from want and fear, in independence from his Creator.

Once we realize the loving and glorious purpose that underlies God's dealings with humanity, we no longer fuss and fret, and fear the future, we do not rebel at the misfortunes of our lot, the miseries of our existence. According to the grace and light vouchsafed to us, we bear our burdens with patience, we bow before the trials that assail us, we acquiesce in evil that is our part, we thank God for the deception, the injustice, the misery, the suffering, the anguish in the world, though it aches our hearts, and we glory in the future fruit of all this deluge of sin and insubjection when the lesson has been learned.

Glory awaits us, far beyond our fondest dreams! Blessedness will be ours beyond our most ardent anticipations! So great is God's grace that we, the last and lowest on the earth, shall be the first and foremost in the empyrean. All hail to our God and Christ Jesus, His beloved Son! For our mission to the celestials is the highest honor in the universe.

A. E. Knoch
THE SUPREMACY OF SPIRIT

The future of humanity lies in its spirit. Our bodies indeed will be glorified, and our souls satisfied, yet even this exultant bliss will depend upon the fact that our very frames will be spiritual, and we will be vivified by the fullness of the spirit. The present mode of operation of the human spirit is not final, nor the ideal of the consummation. The spirit is now with us in humiliation and weakness, unable to dominate the body which it vitalizes. It is but the feeble flicker of a candle, as compared with the splendor of the sun in the future glory. Difficult as it is to define the function of the spirit in humanity today, we at least have our experience as a check. For the future we have nothing but the bare Word of God. Nevertheless, to really gain a clear conception of the human spirit in its essence, we must know it in the light of its manifestation, as well as in the hour of its humiliation.

The Word of God can penetrate up to the parting of soul and spirit. I doubt whether any other literature, unless it is based solely upon the Scriptures, is competent to do this. Even for well instructed saints, the boundary between soul and spirit is but faintly defined. Hence no one need be unduly concerned if our present attempt is not easy to understand at first sight. It is a field of thought where men, because they are living souls, find delving difficult. We are constrained, by our very constitution, to consider things by means of our senses. Hence we learn about the body with comparative ease. The soul also makes a strong impression upon us. But the spirit, which cannot be appre-
hended by our senses, especially if we seek its acquaintance through its effects, tends to sink to the level of the soul whenever we seek to seize upon its essence.

The language used of the spirit is, therefore, largely figurative, and may easily lead to false conclusions. The very word in Hebrew, *ruach*, is not literal. A recent Jewish translation, not seeing the figure, has tried to get an intermediate or composite meaning by rendering it “spirit-roaring” or “roaring,” when it plainly denotes wind. He tries to force the figure into the meaning. Such a course has often caused confusion of thought, and is one of the chief pitfalls which beset the concordant student. We cannot deduce from the phrase “a broken spirit” (Psa.51:17) that the spirit must be solid substance because only such can be broken. Nor can we say that a sore (wounded) spirit (Prov.18:14) identifies the spirit with the body, for only living tissue can be sore. Deductions of this kind from figurative expressions are deceptive.

We speak of some of the manifestations of spirit as “feelings,” whereas these are literally sensations, hence belong to the body and are the soul. But we must remember that no feeling is possible without the power of the spirit acting on the body. Hence the word “feeling” is largely used in a figurative sense, even when there is no direct bodily sensation. It is doubtful, however, if these are ever entirely absent, as the spirit affects the body, and through it the soul, very powerfully. Thus sorrow and contrition, joy and exultation, may arise purely from the spirit, but they never fail to affect the functioning of the body and thus are “felt” by the soul. Because we must speak of the manifestations of the spirit in terms of substance and sensation, we have almost lost the power of identifying the spirit, and confuse it with its effects.

In previous studies on this theme we have considered spirit in its manifestations, life and sensation. We tried to
ing in a soulish body, it is not essential to the human spirit, even as it is not needed by spirit beings. We might make this clear by means of a parallel. The food we eat seems essential to the human body. Certainly it cannot live long, as at present constituted, without food, or apart from the soil from which our sustenance is derived. But the fact that the human body can also be a celestial one shows that the soil is necessary to the body only in its present state. If this is so as regards the body, how much more may it be true of the spirit! The further fact that there are spirits, without flesh and bones, makes it practically self-evident. Spirit in general, as well as the human spirit, cannot be confined to the conditions under which humanity exists during the process which involves humiliation and death and the withholding of the fullness of the spirit.

To simplify the subject, we will ignore the bodies and spirits of the circumcision saints who remain upon the earth. Their state reveals less of the spirit’s power than ours, whose bodies will be changed for a celestial environment. What is revealed concerning our future frames seems to be the highest manifestation of the human spirit. Hence here we will receive the most help in understanding the spirit. And here we will be best guarded from allowing our present experience in a soulish body to obscure our apprehension of the glorious possibilities of the human spirit when fittingly equipped and at its best.

The secret of the resurrection reveals that, in our case, this terrestrial body will be changed to a celestial one. It will no longer be a soulish or a soulish body, but a celestial and a spiritual body. Nothing is said as to any change in our spirits. Then as now we will have bodies and spirits. But this body is not that which shall be. Would we not be informed if our spirits were different? Are we not justified in assuming that our spirit is the same and of the same kind? God’s silence on this point seems conclusive.
we will be more like a permanent electric bulb, which does not (or cannot) be used up, oxygen is excluded, but to which a continuous stream of energy is conveyed from without. So will we be when we are connected with the life of God.

In the case of the lamp it is difficult for us to think of the power apart from its effects. It has been stored in the fuel used. But we know that oil and oxygen (food and breath) would never unite unless first a certain amount of power is imparted. This corresponds with the impartation of the spirit to Adam.

But the wick eventually becomes burned up, which might illustrate the operation of death. The point is that now God gives the spirit to each descendant of Adam, but only in measure. There is no continuous supply. We live on for a brief period independent of God’s immediate power.

A rather striking experiment I once saw in the laboratory of my dear departed friend, Vladimir Gelesnoff, may help our minds still further. Electrical energy is usually produced in a rather roundabout way, through the fall of water or the combustion of coal. The energy of the sun is stored up on the earth and recovered by means of machinery. Dynamos are needed to produce it. But this is not necessary. Heat can be derived directly from the sun. In the experiment to which I refer a small electric lamp was lit by catching the sun’s energy in a substance which looked like yellow powder. Put this powder in the sunlight and it would absorb enough energy to light the electric bulb. Theoretically, such an arrangement would give continuous light, at least so long as the sun or some other source would supply the energy.

As energy produces light when applied to substances, so spirit produces life. Perhaps this will help us to broaden our ideas as to spirit, and not limit it to particular manifestations. The energy applied to the lamp, as well as that produced by the combustion of the oil by combining that

stored up in its substance with that in the air, and the energy in the electric current is all essentially the same, though quite different in its mode of manifestation. What we may say about the lamp and its energy may be quite true and helpful, yet it must not be made universal, or applied to all energy at all times. So it is with the spirit and the human body. At present it is not a spiritual body, but a soulish one. In a spiritual body the spirit will have a different mode of manifestation, hence the body itself must be modified.

Let us preserve the same distance between our parallels. Energy is not spirit. One produces motion, or light, the other life. Energy cannot be personal, spirit can. If the spirit in man is simply the latent energy stored up in him or produced by his body, then he is a robot, a mechanical marvel, a combination of substance and power, but lacking life. As life is unspeakably more than motion, so is spirit more than energy. Everywhere there is latent energy, which, when released, will produce motion, heat, light. The sun sheds it upon us in abundance. But spirit makes itself evident in a higher manifestation, and operates only in organized matter. Its realm is clearly defined in chemistry where organic and inorganic each has a field of its own.

THE SPIRIT IN PLANTS

Moreover, there is vast variety in the organisms which are vitalized by spirit. Plants live and breathe and have a limited motion not only downwards but also upwards against the force of gravity. They sometimes exert a tremendous amount of energy. The giant trees of California, the oldest and largest form of life on earth, pump up vast quantities of moisture from the ground to a height of two or three hundred feet. But plants have no sensation, no soul. The hair in man is somewhat like this. It may be cut off or otherwise mutilated without appreciable pain.
Spirit in Plants and Animals

It seems to have no blood hence no sensation. In the hair, plant life seems to find its place in the human frame.

THE SPIRIT IN ANIMALS

In animals the spirit uses a higher organism, much more separate from the ground and independent of the earth. There is no need of constant contact with the soil. Substance, usually organized plant life, is absorbed from within, to sustain the flow of power. Breathing is also an inward process, in contrast to the leaves of the plant. Movement is extended to locomotion. So we see that the spirit operates in quite a different way, through different organs, but it is spirit nevertheless. Mankind has very much in common with animals. Both have locomotion and sensation, with such functions as feeling, smelling, hearing, and seeing. The point is that the instrument through which the spirit functions, rather than the spirit itself, determines the effect in each of the many forms of life.

Mankind occupies an intermediate place between animals and spirits. But the tendency of God’s dealings with him is toward the spiritual realm. The change wrought at His vivification does not make him a spirit, but it brings him into a condition where he can associate with spirit beings and is able to judge them (1 Cor.6:3). In this way some section of humanity has contact with every part of creation, and is able to fulfill the functions which fall to it in Christ. We must not fail, therefore, to consider the human spirit in the future as well as in the present if we wish to understand its essence. In its present manifestations, and in our experience, it is almost impossible to consider it apart from the soul, through which alone we become conscious of it. Outside the Scriptures the words pertaining to soul and spirit are so confused that clear thinking is practically impossible. The soul is often spoken of when the spirit is intended, as well as the reverse.

All Spirits are Alike in Essentials

SPIRIT BEINGS

Whatever may be the relation between matter and spirit, they are very different in the impression made upon us. Unclean spirits seem to desire to enter the human body, as in demoniacs. Celestial messengers may have spiritual bodies. Yet God Himself has no corporate organism outside of Christ. In all of these cases it is evident that a spirit being is able to exist and operate quite apart from a body. It is when they wish to make themselves known to mankind that some material form seems necessary. So God reveals Himself in Christ, the messengers become visible to human eyes, the evil spirits use the organs of a human being in order to communicate with us. The point we wish to press is this: A spirit can exist quite apart from a material form. Why should not this be true of the human spirit as well? We cannot perceive a spirit being apart from material substance, nor our own spirits, but does this prove their non-existence? Existence does not involve consciousness in humanity, however. Is it not wiser to consider all spirits as alike in the essentials, unless evidence proves the contrary? Is not this the reason why the word “spirit” is applied to all?

Some may say that this is reasoning from analogy, from spirit beings to human spirits, and is metaphysics and not Scripture. Quite the contrary. There is no reasoning whatever. There are no premises. God, in His Word, calls sensation in an animal a soul, and so we believe that the soul is the same thing in an animal as in a man, quite contrary to the reasonings of metaphysics. And since God, in His Word, uses the same term for the spirit in man as for another part of His creation, it is faith, and not reasoning, which bows to His revelation. We simply give spirit the same meaning throughout, whatever its manifestation may be. There is no figure. To insist that spirit is spirit is not
reasoning but revelation. So it is with every part of man’s composition in the lower spheres of the animal kingdom. Body, blood, breath, etc., have one meaning in animals and in man. So it is with spirit.

The fact that the human spirit has no consciousness apart from a body should not enter into this question, for, in sleep, it has none even with a body. And God has been pleased to explain death to us by means of slumber. Consciousness is only one of the possible manifestations of the spirit, and belongs to the soul. In death the spirit returns to God. In resurrection and vivification it comes back to man. In the interval the man is dead, but the elements of which he was composed still exist, both matter and spirit. The matter is not used again, necessarily, for it was continually being renewed even during life. In vivification there is a vast change, this corruptible puts on incorruption and this mortal immortality, but this is concerned with the body rather than with the spirit. There is nothing to show that those who are alive become a different spirit, or that the spirit that returned to God remains with Him, or that it is altered, as is the case with the body.

The Scriptures do speak of a new spirit, but never in the literal sense of displacing the human spirit in resurrection. Ezekiel twice speaks of the new heart and the new spirit which will be given to Israel, and explains it as the spirit of Yahweh (Ezek.18:31; 36:26,27). In describing their spiritual resurrection it is again the spirit of Yahweh (Ezek.37). Although it is not so expressed in the Scriptures, all who receive the spirit of God may be said to have a “new” spirit. But let us keep all such matters out of the present enquiry, for they deal with a totally different phase of spirit manifestations. Neither let us bring in the many figurative expressions, as the spirit of grace, or truth, etc. These are not in point in the present investigation.

Thus mankind, in accord with the high counsels of God concerning it, may be said to combine in itself all the grades of living creatures, from the plants to the spirits, from the most elementary cell to the very highest form, as in the Deity. Man partakes of plant life, of animal life, and of the life of spirits. But the latter is largely future, when all are vivified, and it is exemplified to the fullest extent only in the celestial selection, those who form Christ’s body. We may consider its present state in humanity as an intermediate one. We are fitted to some extent to be set over the lower creatures, for we have bodies and souls like theirs. But, at present, we are beneath spirit beings, and cannot take our place over them until we have been equipped with our new habitations which are from the heavens.

BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT

It may be helpful to clarify the distinctions between soul and spirit before going further. The great gulf between body and spirit makes them antithetical in many ways, even if we consider matter as a manifestation of energy, as scientists do in these days. Material substance is tangible, and affects our senses. Spirit may not directly affect our bodily sensations. Paul speaks of his being in Corinth in the spirit and in the flesh. When he was there in flesh he could be seen and heard. When with them in spirit they had no organs to perceive him. Only indirectly, as they read his words with their eyes, or heard them read with their ears, or recalled his bodily presence with their memories, would his spiritual presence affect their thoughts and actions.

The distinction between soul and spirit is one of the most elusive there is. Let us see if we cannot simplify it by a process of elimination. All that is ours which is not matter or sensation is spirit. The problem is to apprehend that which cannot be perceived. The body is perceptible, the soul is perception itself, the spirit is imperceptible. That is why this term is also used to include the spirit world. Think-
Life is not Consciousness

ing is essentially unconscious, though it may be accompanied with sensations, either as cause or effect. A terrifying noise goes through the spirit and produces a sensation of fear. That thinking is essentially unconscious is evident when we “act before we think.” The consciousness of danger sometimes comes after we have sought to evade it.

That the mind or spirit really operates without our knowledge or direction is evident from the many vital functions which operate independently of our will. In many the spirit is ceaselessly working to keep us alive. The lungs, the heart, the digestion, the brain—all these go on when we sleep, when our souls are not functioning, hence are due to vital energy, which is spirit.

Life, and spirit, its source, lie far beneath our consciousness, so we may recognize it only by its operation, where there is no sensation or will, in our own bodies. If the spirit were conscious we would be aware of all the vital organs and their movements. But life, as well as spirit, is not consciousness. That is only an effect, limited to certain combinations. Not only in sleep do the vital processes go on, but while we awake our consciousness is limited, like our sight and our hearing, to a certain segment of the actual realm of life and motion. We do not see all there is, but only as through a narrow slit. Neither do we hear all sounds. Some are too low, others too high, for our ears. So it is with our spirit. We are aware of only a fragment of it. The rest is hidden from us, or known only from its effects. We can always be sure that where there is life there must be spirit, even though there is nothing which makes any impression on our senses.

In the resurrection we do not sow the body that shall be. God will give us a different body. In contrast to this the spirit comes back when we awake from death. Hence we are roused not merely sentient beings without any connection with the past, but the same individuals as before, capable

The Spirit does not Disintegrate

of profiting from our experiences before death. Otherwise these would have no value in God’s great purpose.

“CONTINUITY” AND “IDENTITY”

The modern trend toward throwing doubt on the resurrection by questioning the “continuity” of “identity,” etc., is no course for us to follow. It deals with the subject as if it were an ordinary event in the course of nature, apart from the special intervention of God. In that realm there is no resurrection, no rousing, no vivification. It is found only in the realm of miracles, only where God works a wonder. Once He is given His place, the difficulties disappear. I am of the opinion that both “continuity” and “identity” (whatever they really mean) are fully provided for in the spirit, which alone, of the two constituents of humanity, has not suffered change and disintegration, and which eventually attains the ascendancy, even as the body was the prime constituent at first. Man’s impermanence, weakness, corruption, and change are all associated with his flesh. His permanence, power, glory, and unchangeableness are all resident in his spirit.

Such questions as “continuity,” “identity,” “memory” in resurrection, and the time when the spirit is imparted to human beings, are not at all necessary to a knowledge of the truth. They are brought up here only because modern scientific enquiry thinks they are vital to the “problem.” They are not definitely discussed in the Scriptures, hence it is not wise to take them seriously, or make them a part of our faith. To faith they are not “problems” at all, for resurrection, rousing, or vivification imply identity, continuity, and memory. The injection of the prenatal life of humanity, when the mother aids in the vital processes, as if it were the life of the mother and not of the child, and as if the child had no life, hence no spirit, before birth, should not and need not perplex. Life is instantaneous.
Its gradual development into independent and conscious life is only a transitional process, which does not affect the truth of resurrection.

Human life does not begin at birth, but at conception. It is always distinct from that of the mother. Even before birth a child can die without involving the death of its mother. It may act quite independently as when John the Baptist jumped when Miriam saluted Elizabeth (Luke 1:14). And he was filled with holy spirit, quite independently of his mother, even before his birth (Luke 1:15). Before birth and before weaning, the vital functions are partly performed for humans by their mothers, but this is quite a distinct matter from the importation of spirit and life. A transitory process like this will not aid us in our investigations, so it is best left out of consideration.

**FLESH AND BLOOD—FLESH AND BONES**  
The combination of flesh with blood seems to indicate our present soulish body, that of flesh and bones the spiritual body. The difference lies in the blood. This in turn involves much else, especially the soul, for, at present, the soul is in the blood. It also involves the whole method of sustaining and vitalizing the body, for both the air and the food are carried to the members of the body by the blood. Not only did our Saviour pour out His blood at His death for our sins, but He also inaugurated a new mode of human life apart from blood at His vivification. When Lazarus and others were raised the blood was still present and resumed its usual functions. Not so when our Lord took back the life He had laid down. The spirit vivified the identical body but not the blood that had been shed. It was not needed. And the body normally seemed to have powers which flesh and blood do not possess.

In contrast to the blood is the return of the spirit. The word *return* has proven to be the key to the death state.

**Spiritual Body—Flesh and Bones**  
So also the expression *turn back* may be of the resurrection. Jairus' daughter had died. In recalling her to life, we read that *her spirit turned back* (Luke 8:55). It seems to be more than mere consciousness or life, but a personal essence of which these are the tokens. It had left her body to return to God, but was brought back by our Lord. This expression is well worth pondering on a point where revelation is very reticent. Where evidence is scarce we must make full use of it, and one intimation in the sacred text is worth more than volumes from other sources. Figuratively the girl was only drowsing, and soon awoke. Literally she was dead.

**THE SPIRIT IN LIFE**  
There are many notable contrasts between the spirit and the flesh in this life, as is evident from the strong moral tinge of their respective adjectives, *fleshly* and *spiritual*. This is greatly emphasized in redemption, for God, especially in this administration, appeals almost exclusively to our spirits. The results, also, are mostly confined to our spirits, even though our bodies (rather than our flesh) are vitalized with its life in a slight degree. But in vivification spirit is still more prominent, and flesh and blood is absent, even the body becoming *spiritual*, though not spirit. If the place of spirit in life is so different from that of the flesh, so that it often stands in contrast to it, we should not expect it to share the fate of the flesh in death. Nothing is said of its dissolution. There is no hint of corruption. It does not go to the unseen, like the soul. The fact that it returns to the Creator Himself is suggestive of its high honor even in the dishonor of death.

Though spirit is, perhaps, the most difficult subject for us humans to comprehend, seeing that we are not spirits, yet even more perplexing is spirit in a state of non-manifestation. We may be able to grasp something of spirit as
it operates in us today, although we are so apt to confuse it with soul. We may even have a measure of apprehension for the operation of the spirit in vivification. But the interval between death and vivification, while the body returns to the soil and the soul to the unseen, from whence they came, seems to be an extraordinary tax upon our mentality. Here it is better to distrust our own thoughts altogether and allow a microscopical examination of the few divine allusions to the spirit at this crisis to make their impression on our minds.

The spirit of our Lord is especially emphasized at His death. When He had committed it to His Father (Luke 23:46), He lets it out (Matt.27:50) and gives it up (John 19:30). Let us consider each of these expressions carefully to see what we can glean from their meaning and usage.

The word *commit* is literally *beside-place para
tathēmi* in Greek. In this sense it is used by our Lord when He instructs His disciples to place the fish and the cakes He had blessed before the throng (Mark 6:41; 8:6,7). As a faded figure, however, it is used by Paul when he gave a charge to Timothy (1 Tim.1:18). When speaking to the Ephesian elders at Miletus he committed *them* to God and to the word of His grace (Acts 20:32). Peter exhorts those who are suffering according to the will of God, to commit their *souls* to a faithful Creator, in the doing of good (1 Peter 4:19). Besides this, a slightly different form is used literally of the *cakes* and *fishes* (Mark 8:6; 11:6; Acts 16:34; 1 Cor.10:27), and figuratively of a *parable* (Matt.13:24,31), of *possessions* (Luke 12:48), *teaching* (Acts 17:3), and of the *disciples* to the Lord (Acts 14:23).

We would not commend our bodies to His care, for we know that they are doomed to dissolution. No intelligent saint would commit his soul to God in death, for he knows that it will return to the unseen. But the Scriptures speak of the spirit in death as a matter which still persists

Committing the Spirit to God

(although it does not *live*), and as a deposit to be left in the personal care of God or of His Christ. Not knowing that consciousness is connected with the *soul*, not with the spirit, it has been usual to use these facts to prove a conscious intermediate state. The reaction from this has left the spirit little more than the breath, which is lost and vanishes in the air. The truth lies in between. The spirit is that part of humanity which returns to God's special keeping, for in it lies the future of mankind and of the individual, when he finally fulfills his destiny in the image of God for which he was created.

It will be seen from this that, in the faded, figurative usage of the word, matters of special value, which are exposed to danger, are committed to those who are to protect and preserve them. The elders at Ephesus had among their number men who would draw disciples after themselves. What could Paul do about it? The only powers which could guard the rest against this course are God Himself and the word of His grace. In Peter, the souls of the saints are in danger. They are liable to persecution. Their Creator alone can guard their souls, and they can do their part by doing good. So, like the Lord's spirit in death, the Ephesian saints, and the souls of Peter's readers, are committed to *God*, for His safekeeping.

It would be well for us to meditate much on the fact that Christ committed His *spirit* to God. He did not commit His *self*, or His *body*, or His *soul* (as most of His followers would do today). His body was committed to the tomb, where men could see it and guard it. His soul entered hades, the imperceptible, hence all sensation and consciousness vanished in oblivion. But we cannot help having the impression that the spirit was a treasure which was guarded by God. The Scriptures leave with us the impression that the spirit still *exists* (not *lives* or is con-
a treasure to be kept by God Himself until resurrection or vivification.

GIVE UP AND LET OUT

The other expressions used point in the same direction. It would be unintelligent to commit the soul to God for there is no sensation. It is only in a very effective and self-evident figure that it is said to be in the imperceptible, or the unseen, for these are terms which denote oblivion. So also nothing is said of giving up the soul or letting out the soul, but this is predicated of the spirit. Our Lord Himself had been given up, a short time before, by Pilate (John 19:16). Always there must be some object to be given up or let out. It denotes the parting with some possession, the emergence of something which has been within.

The case of our Lord may have been exceptional, so it is well that we have the corroboration of Stephen, when he died. As they were pelting him with stones, he said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” (Acts 7:59). That the Lord would receive him in resurrection was clear enough to Stephen. That He did not receive his body is also evident. And so with his soul. There is evidently a sense in which the spirit is “received” by the Lord while the soul sleeps and the body decays.

THE TWO WITNESSES

A very notable instance of the return to life is given us in the account of the two witnesses. We read that “spirit of life out of God entered into them and they stand on their feet.” In the phrase “spirit of life,” the word life is a metonymy, which shows the source of the life, that is, the spirit which imparts life. It is remarkable also that it is not the spirit of God, but [a] spirit out of God, evidently their own spirits which had returned to God in death, entering their bodies once more. This fully confirms the fact that,

in death, the human spirit is in God’s keeping in such a way that it returns in resurrection.

In death the three human factors return whence they came. But there is a great difference between their sources, as also that to which they return. Two are impersonal. One is personal. The body comes from the soil and goes back to it. It is soil like any other soil. The same substance may, at different times, be a part of the tissue of two or more persons. The soul is even more vague. Out of oblivion it comes and into the imperceptible it returns. As we have seen, the breath seems to sustain the spirit, as food from the soil does the body. But the spirit is not breath by any means, and does not return to the air. It comes from God, and returns to Him. It is not merely a portion of power taken from the great universal reservoir of energy, and poured back into it again. In man it comes from the Deity. Here the creature contacts the Creator. It returns to the great Father of Spirits. Lacking life and consciousness, yet it has existence, and, in one case, returned to a lifeless body and brought it back to life. Hence we may commend it to His keeping at the approach of death.

GOD’S SPIRIT IN US

In vivification God will give us a far more glorious body than we now possess. Nothing like this is said of our spirit. It is not in the same class with the flesh. The disposition of the spirit is life and peace (Rom.8:6). The change in vivification (Rom.8:11) is not due to our spirit, but to the homing of God’s spirit in us. Even in our mortal bodies, we have an earnest of His spirit, and it brings us a foretaste of future vivification, when we use our members to please God. And it is by the power of His spirit that our bodies will be transformed and glorified, not our own. In this way will God be All in us. Hence there is no need to change our spirits, or give them power or glory. The spirit
of God in us will be the source of continuous and unceasing strength, splendor, and delight. Our own spirits will be welded with His; no longer dragged in the dust by the death-dealing flesh, but raised to the highest heights by association with the life-giving spirit of God.

When the spirit is supreme our humiliation will be past. Our vitality will be so vast, we will be so vibrant with life, that incorruption, deathlessness, power, and glory will be as marked as corruption, mortality, weakness, and shame are now. And all will be brought about by simply imparting the spirit without measure. There is a close analogy between life and salvation. Physical life, like Israel’s salvation, is a combination of works and grace. The spirit was given, yet it must be exercised. But the grace we now have is all of God, without any works of ours, so is like the fullness of the spirit and the life that is to be. It is simply God, by His spirit, becoming our All. No longer will we derive power, life, spirit from Him in driblets, through hindering channels, but we will bask directly in the beneficent beams of His irradiating spirit.

Mankind, to be human, must have a body. It cannot be changed into a formless spirit and remain humanity, or fulfill its functions in God’s purpose. But hitherto the body has been a means of its humiliation and degradation. In the future the spirit will be the cause of its rise and exaltation. Now the spirit is suppressed and defeated. In the future it will be untrammeled and victorious. May this glimpse of its future permanence and power and supremacy help us in our present life to give it the place supreme!

Keenly conscious of the vastness of this theme, compared with our limited apprehension, we place these suggestive thoughts before our friends, and urge them to test all by the inspired Scriptures, where alone we find the truth in its purity.

A. E. Knoch
The Problem of Evil
and
the Judgments of God

How can we explain the presence of evil? Is there a purpose for evil, and will it come to an end? Can there be two independent opposing forces in the universe? If God alone is supreme, what is the purpose of judgment? Surely there are answers to these troubling questions in the Word of God.

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JULY, 2011

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EDITORIAL

God, Who is invisible, makes Himself known in two principal ways. Much of His imperceptible power is described from the creation of the world in achievements far beyond anything we could do (Rom.1:20,21; cp Acts 17:24-29). But this does not make God known to us in such a way that we glorify and thank Him as God. It is only as God is illuminated “in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor.4:6), Who is the Image of the invisible God (Col.1:15), that His highly important, and truly representative attributes of righteousness and love and power for salvation are made manifest (cf Rom.1:16,17; 5:8). It is only as we become acquainted with God in this way, as He is unfolded in Christ (cf John 1:18), that we will glorify Him aright.

Both of these means for making God known are treated in Romans in passages that come under consideration in this issue of our magazine. And in both cases certain details of translation are given special attention.

The use of the word “eternal” for the Greek word, αἰώνιος, in Romans 1:20 obscures what Paul is saying about perceiving the power and divinity of the invisible God by means of His visible achievements in creation. See the opening article entitled, “Imperceptible” or “Eternal” starting on page 147.

And the rendering of the Greek term, ἐφό, by the words “for that” or “because” in Romans 5:12, as well as translating the Greek preposition, εν, by the English preposition “unto” in Romans 5:21, sadly distort Paul’s comparison between Adam and Christ, with the result that what the apostle says about the grace of God made known through
Knowing God as God

Jesus Christ, is not fully conveyed. This is treated in detail in several articles and brief notes (mostly concerning Romans 5:20,21) throughout the rest of the magazine.

How can we know God as God? The grace of God—what is it? We come to know God as God as He is made known in and through His Son, Jesus Christ. We come to know God’s grace as it is put into action in the death of His Son for sinners. By means of Christ’s act of dying on the cross, the effects of Adam’s one offense on humanity are put to an end. This is not a cooperative work of deliverance in which we must make a contribution. But rather it is a work of grace. It is God’s favor in the giving of His Son, resulting in the favor of righteousness and life and peace, not only for us, but ultimately for all mankind.

More and more I have come to appreciate the Concordant Version. This is not to claim it is perfect or that its goal of properly conveying in English what was originally expressed in Hebrew or Greek is always successfully achieved. But by its rendering of Romans 1:20 and even more so of Romans 5:12-21, I have come to grasp Paul’s thoughts in these passages more clearly than possible from most other versions. And this is true in many other cases.

Indeed the work of translation is not an easy one. Among ourselves, as we examine God’s Word, we keep asking, “What is this passage saying?” And then, “How can this best be conveyed in English, while still endeavoring to keep to our principles of consistency and contextual agreement?” Finally we must ask ourselves, “Will we be ready to reexamine what we have done and consider changes on the basis of evidence we may have overlooked and of sound argument?” Thus the struggle continues. Yet in this we are assured, that God is revealed to us in His Word and this especially as it speaks of Jesus Christ, our Lord, in type, in prophecy, and most particularly for us in the evangel of God which concerns His Son.  

D.H.H.
“IMPERCEPTIBLE” or “ETERNAL”?

In a very few instances, the Concordant Version departs entirely from the meaning usually assigned to a word, and gives it a new rendering. Such is the case with aidios, usually rendered everlasting or eternal in Roman 1:20 and Jude 6, the only occurrences. We owe an explanation to those who question our rendering.

Our suspicions were first aroused as to the usual claim that aidios—supposedly, even as aiónios—also means “everlasting” or “eternal,” by the passage in Jude 6 in the Authorized Version in which this word appears: “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” Of what use would everlasting chains be if their use was limited, by the word unto, to a period which is exceedingly brief when compared to eternity?

Some have wondered how angels, or messengers, could be bound by chains. What sort of bonds could hold them? As we will soon see, this word aidios gives us the answer. They will not be forged of iron or of brass. They will be imperceptible. The material is “darkness” or gloom (Jude 6). Surely this is far more satisfactory than “everlasting . . . unto,” which is a contradiction in itself.

Romans 1:20, the remaining passage in which aidios appears, also presents a grave difficulty in the AV translation: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.”
Aidios means “Imperceptible,”

The whole passage is concerned with the evidence which the visible world furnishes for the apprehension of the invisible. God’s “unseen” attributes are made obvious from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements—it being the case as well that thus His imperceptible power and divinity are likewise apprehended.

God’s imperceptible power and divinity are the unseen attributes referred to which are apparent from His achievements in creation. The literary setting is a reversal, a common but striking device:

His unseen (attributes);
The creation
His achievements
Imperceptible power and divinity.

In the central members, “His achievements” is but an amplification of “creation,” and in the other members the phrase “His imperceptible power and divinity,” is but an amplification of “His unseen” attributes.

The power and divinity of God cannot be perceived directly in nature, but can be apprehended through His creative achievements. Every wind and wave is witness to an unseen force which impels it, with a hidden power like the electric current, to fulfil His will. Every living thing bespeaks a Living One Who is divine. This power and this divinity is imperceptible to the physical eye. It must be apprehended from the phenomena of nature.

There is nothing in the creation which conveys to the mind of man the eternity of God’s power and divinity. The passage does not deal with time at all, but with the knowledge of God’s invisible attributes, and a power and divinity which may be known only indirectly, through creation.

In Romans 1:20, the Concordant Version reads: “For His invisible attributes are described from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements, besides His imperceptible power and divinity, for them to be defenseless” (Rom 1:20).

Let us carefully note the context in Romans 1:20. God’s invisible attributes are described from the creation of the world, being apprehended by His achievements. Is not power one of His invisible attributes? Is not divinity? These certainly cannot be seen or felt. They are imperceptible. Why not call them so? If His attributes cannot be seen with the eyes, neither can His power or divinity be perceived by any of man’s senses.

The whole argument is concerned with the revelation of the moral in the material, the invisible by the visible, the imperceptible by the apparent. The injection of the idea of time is not only discordant but fallacious.

Even though there is nothing in creation to indicate the duration of God’s power, on the other hand, all nature is vocal with evidence of a might beyond the human or the creature. It is the lenses which reveals His imperceptible power and divinity.

Let us be clear that two distinct terms are both commonly translated eternal and everlasting. One of these, aionios, eonian, has already been fully discussed in “The Eonian Times.” 1 It speaks of duration during the eons. 2 The other word, aidios, has no connection with the eons and must present a different thought.

Since the usage of the word seemed to be at variance with its significance, we examined its elements with a view to discovering its literal, derivative import. The first element evidently is a-, meaning un-. Its second element is -id-, which has come down to us in our word idea.

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Consonants are Stable,

means PERCEIVE. From it we have idol, idolatry, idolator, referring to a god which the human senses can perceive. The nearest word is [h]adēs, UNPERCEIVED, the unseen, in which the letter i has been dropped. Indeed, the elements are precisely the same. The only difference is in the ending, which does not affect the word's significance.

Let us note that, in Hebrew and Greek, and even in English, consonants are far more stable than vowels. We can alter the vowels in many words without affecting their primary sense. Come and came are the same word. Code and come are not. In Greek the vowels, even in the elements, are very unstable: -gen-, -gin-, -gon-, -gnee—all stand for BECOME.

In Hebrew this is still more noticeable. What, then, is the most important letter in the word aiddos? It is the -d-. Yet the usual derivation, from aei, ignores it entirely! We are asked not only to ignore the determining consonant but to drop one vowel as well in order to trace an artificial relationship to aei.

If we derive aiddos from a-id, there is no necessity to ignore or add anything. All is regular. We do not need to omit the vital consonant. All we need to do is to test our result by the contexts. Does imperceptible give us a vigorous, harmonious idea in the places where we find it, especially in Romans 1:20 where it is clearly used definitively?

Indeed, it is a difficult matter to see how aiddos could ever be derived from a-ei. That the a in one carries the same force as the a in the other is freely acknowledged. But then the likeness ceases. Id cannot be found in ei even if they have one common vowel. The only reason they were ever associated was a supposed identity in meaning.

Perhaps the primary reason why aiddos cannot well be derived from aei, is because aei, according to its elements, is UN-IF. Hence it is rendered “ever” in the Concordant Version, in the sense not of that which is endless, but of

Vowels are Mutable

that which occurs “unconditionally or on any occasion.” 3Aei (UN-IF) speaks of what occurs, so to speak, on a “no-if”-about-it” basis. That is, it speaks not of what exists eternally or without end, but of what occurs without question or without fail, albeit, during the course of a finite period.

Pilate had ever, aei, granted a prisoner to the Jews at the Passover. He surely did not do this in eternity past or future. Thus “the throng, exclaiming, begins to be requesting [of him] according as he ever did for them” (Mark 15:8), that he should be releasing to them a certain prisoner (cf Mark 15:6,7; cp Acts 7:51; 2 Cor 6:10).

We have resolved aion-ios (feminine) / aion-ion (neuter) into its elements and found that it was composed of two parts, aion, an en, and the adjectival ending ios / ion, which corresponds to our ian. Thus we have eonian.

Let us likewise analyze aiddos. It is made up of three elements: -a-id-ion, UN-PERCEIVE, and the same termination as eonian. Not only its etymology, but far more significantly, its definitive scriptural usage, yields the meaning imperceptible.

Aiddos is very closely related to the word for “hades,” [h]adēs, the elements of which signify UN-PERCEIVED4 (cp eidon, “perceive”5).

In fact, aiddos (i.e., “imperceptible”) is the corresponding descriptive form of [h]adēs (i.e., the “unperceived”). Thus we have the adjective, “imperceptible,” and the noun, “not perceived.” Hence we could well render Jude 6 “hadean bonds” (not chains); but it is better to preserve the real meaning of the anglicized term hades by translating imperceptible bonds.

This is in closest harmony with the succeeding phrase,

5. Keyword Concordance, p.221, entry “perceive.”
“Eternity” is Incomprehensible

God will be All in all

the grand consummation. These are revealed, and we can readily read the future by their means.

But when all these waymarks have been passed, we shall be content to walk the eternal way without the need we now feel of knowing our future path. Now the present is discounted: the future is filled with blessing. Now faith and expectation urge us to hasten to the bliss that lies ahead.

But then all will be changed. Love alone will rule our hearts. The future will have no dread, neither will its expectations tempt us from a delectable present. With God as our All, the past will fill our cups with brimming bliss, the present will suffice to quaff its unfailing fullness, and the future will be but another present when we embrace it.

It is vain to tell the old man not to envy the days of youth; it is futile to tell the youth not to wish for the days of manhood; it is useless to ask a man to be satisfied with his lot; for each finds his all in himself. But when God becomes All in all His creatures, the past and future are swallowed up in a blissful, unbroken present.

It is the part of divine Wisdom to give a revelation suited to human need and capacity, and when endlessness is intended, to employ the negative terms “no consummation” (cp Luke 1:33b)—the very method to which men are forced when they seek to define “everlasting” and “eternal.”

A. E. Knoch

(Adapted from Unsearchable Riches, vol.8, pp.33-36; vol.18, pp.244-247.)

THE FUNCTION OF THE LAW

The Mosaic law appears to place the responsibility of keeping it on the shoulders of Israel. But later revelation not only shows that it would not be kept, but that it was not given for that purpose, and indeed, it could not be kept by sons of Adam. It crept in, not to decrease sin, but to increase offense (Rom.5:20). If a law had been given to men who could have kept it, they would have done so, and displayed their own righteousness (Gal.3:21). But as it is, they cannot do so, and so, by their unrighteousness and its judgment, they display God’s righteousness, which is the real aim of God’s law.

A. E. K.

6. Keyword Concordance, p.90, entry “eternal”
SIN REIGNS IN DEATH

We all know that sin leads to death. But that the action is reciprocal, so that death is the cause, not merely of acts of sin, but of the practice and principle, which makes us sinners, has been practically lost to us because our translators gave it no place if they could help it.

The apostle tells us that sin reigns in death (Rom.5:21), but they changed this to unto death, thus spoiling the sense and the figure at one stroke. Sin's sovereignty is not unto death but in death. Death is the sphere of its sway, the only territory which yields homage to its horrid tyranny.

Let us not lose the force of this figure. Where death is, there sin is supreme. The process of dying, which we call life, produces that predilection to err which is called sin, and puts all under the absolute despotism of Sin. Apart from a new life no sinner can escape servitude from this master. Hence we read the glorious contrast: “thus grace, also, should be reigning, through righteousness, for eonian life through Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Rom.5:21).

We press the absolute tyranny of Sin in its own territory, death, not only for its own sake, but to impress the far more potent fact that Grace also is a tyrant, not one whit less securely seated than Sin. O, that the saints would only acknowledge its sway and bow to its beneficent despotism! We all allow Sin's sovereignty, but how few glory in the Grace that utterly displaces it?

A. E. Knoch

(Excerpted from Unsearchable Riches, vol.17, pp.136,137.)
GRACE VERSUS SIN

God has shown us His glorious goal, which is a delivered and righteous and vivified humanity (Rom.5:18,19). But by what means shall God bring humanity into this goal? By law or grace? And if grace, is it adequate? The final contrast of Romans 5:12-21 is between sin and grace. And, as in every contrast between the destructive and saving forces, the superiority is shown to be with the latter—grace superexceeds the utmost increase of sin (verse 20).

The means are more than adequate; they are superexcessive. And the final comparison in verse 21, like the preceding ones, shows that the “thus also” of grace is as extensive as the “even as” of sin. The reign of grace is not limited to an elect few, nor is it less effective for those over whom it reigns than is the reign of sin.

Yet law came in by the way that the offense should be increasing. Yet where sin increases, grace superceeds,

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20. Yet law came in by the way, as it were alongside of sin and death, which had entered long before. This is said to show that beside these it can claim equality neither in time nor place, and that the need of it is temporary.

Law means the law of Moses. This is evident from verses 13, 14 and all the subsequent discussion about law.
Law is Designed to Increase the Offense

The offense is that offense already mentioned four times (verses 15, 17, 18). The “many offenses” (16) are regarded as a multiplication of the offense of Adam. The singular, the offense, seems to be expressly chosen to indicate that all offenses are as such repetitions of the first offense. Offense in the head repeats itself in lawlessness and offensiveness in the whole family. Every offensive deed proclaims itself the offspring of the original offense. The function of law is to make it manifest that the first offense included in its character all possible offense. It shows also that mankind has not only inherited the status of sinners, but a proclivity to disobedience. Thus while Adam and the entire race have been left behind, the forces he introduced into the race remain, manifesting themselves in every life.

“Where no law is, neither is there transgression” (Rom. 4:15), but this cannot be said of offense. Offense has a much wider meaning than transgression. Gentiles without law and even saints offend. Christ was given up because of our offenses, but if these were offenses against the law, the gospel might be restricted to those who knew law. The world has offended (2 Cor.5:19); saints offend their Father and each other (Gal.6:1; Eph.1:7; Col.2:13).

The striking contrast of verse 20 is introduced by the words where sin increases. Where is wherever there is sin, and that is as wide as the world into which sin entered. Sin increases in all men. It multiplies with the multiplication of the race. Every child born into the world brings in more sin. The word increases pictures the great fecundity of sin. It multiplies like leaven, one sin being prolific of many others. This unlimited capability of multiplying itself is the most appalling fact about sin in view of all the evil wrought by one sin. Why does God allow sin to multiply? Why did He not prevent this monstrous increase by destroying the first sinners? Because sin can never, with all its fecundity, increase beyond the power of grace to con-
Sin is Greater than Offense
quer and cancel it. The greater the sin the more excessive is grace seen to be.

Grace *superexceeds* the utmost increase of sin. Paul had to coin a few words because he found none in the language that were big enough to express the great truths he had to reveal. *Huperperisseuó* was one of them. He took the word *perisseuó*, itself a strong word expressing excess or superfluity, and further strengthened it by prefixing *huper*, over, super, giving the word superlative force. The corresponding words *increases* and *superexceeds* are related as comparative and superlative. This superlative word is much stronger than the “much rather” found in the other contrasts.

The increase of sin must be far surpassed. Grace is not only enough, nor more than enough; it is superexcessive above all the multiplication of sin. When Christ fed the multitudes all were satisfied and there was a great surplus (Matt.14:20). So God’s wealth of grace far exceeds all our need or asking or thinking. Sin increases, but grace does not. It is what it is, superlative in every sense. There is no possibility of increasing God’s grace, of making it greater than it already is, though there may be increasing manifestations of it (6:1). Grace does not increase because God does not. Though sin should seek to dam up the flow of grace, its superexcess overflows and overwhelsms and obliterates every obstacle.

Grace implies sin. It is more than love: it is love that can stop and righteously take the chiefest sinner into its bosom. Grace is found only where sin is, but where sin is there also is grace in rich excess. Grace is the only way of salvation; it is the characteristic truth of the gospel. Without it there is no evang for sinners. Paul, the foremost of sinners, preaches grace out of his experience and as a revelation. The word is found in every section of every epistle of his, for in a word it states his gospel. God is One, and He is always a God of grace (Exodus 33:19; 34:6).

yet Grace *Superexceeds* It

Grace alone can abolish sin. Did we know only of law and its penalties we should expect the increase of sin to evoke a corresponding outburst of divine indignation. But punishment would leave sin still the victor. Penalties do not save. Two and a half millenniums of punishment have fallen on Israel and the nation is not yet saved. But the nation shall be brought forth at once when God pouris upon it the spirit of grace and supplication. No one, whether Jew or Greek, can ever be saved but by grace. Grace is the only power that can conquer and abolish sin, for so long as the just penalty of sin remains, sin still reigns in death. Punishment still leaves sin the victor and grace unsatisfied.

The very superexcess of grace assures us of its final victory over all sin. Grace and sin are irreconcilable enemies. Between them there must be age-long conflict, for grace will not condone nor tolerate sin. It can never cease its antagonism to sin and death till they are utterly extinguished. Can we be sure that the final victory will be with grace and not with sin? Can we be sure that the power of God for salvation is adequate to the task?

We belittle grace and underestimate the power of God when we think that they are scarcely great enough to cope with “willful sin.” Some seem to think that grace can save good people, but that in especially bad cases grace is dependent on some help from the sinner himself. Grace needs no more help to save than sin needs help to slay. Grace alone is sufficient to the task. It does not spurn the use of means, but includes them. But instrumentalities should not be considered in a passage which singles out for contrast the two great pivotal facts on which turn the whole history and destiny of the race. Grace in every way superexceeds its antagonist sin, and therefore will not permit the continuance of sin in God’s humanity. As the antiseptic properties of the ocean prevent the growth of putrefaction continually poured into it from many sources, as
the remedial forces of nature are continually combatting disease, so is grace checking and overcoming sin. The last word will be grace and not sin.

Sin and grace met and measured their strength at Golgotha. Sin showed its utmost enmity in its murderous assault upon the Son of God. It was allowed to come to a head, to appear at its wickedest and to do its damnedest that it might be dealt with centrally and finally. Grace exposed sin at the cross. Which proved the greater? Hate encountered suffering love; sin was vanquished by grace. If we see only man’s sin crucifying the sinless Son of Man, we look for the fiercest indignation to be visited on him. Instead of wrath grace made its advent. But if we see man’s sin crucified, then we see the victory and enthronement of grace. The grace that exhibits the bloodguiltiness of sin in the very act of mastering it takes away all doubt of the final issue. The victory of grace secures salvation for humanity.

21. In Romans 5:21 Sin and Grace, are personified as two rival queens. These royal figures occupy two thrones, each regarding the other as her implacable enemy and her rival in the struggle for absolute sovereignty in the domain of humanity. Grace has begun a war of expulsion and has brought her superior force into the field to fight till victory is won.

The ultimate design in giving law and the employment of the strength of grace is that grace should be reigning for eonian life. God’s ultimate aim in His use of law was not to increase the offense, but to show its impotence to save and so prepare for the reign of grace. Sin in the flesh is stronger than an external divine law. Law is not the antagonist of sin, nor do works of law help Grace in her warfare with Sin. Law retires and leaves the two combatants on the field. The correlatives even as thus also again insist on exact correspondence. If sin really reigns in death, the achievement of grace shall not fall, either in

The Future Belongs to Grace

extent or efficacy, behind that of sin. Both claim the same dominion. Wherever Sin has extended her rule there Grace with her greater power and authority shall come. Though Grace ascended her throne later, her reign shall continue when Sin has been dethroned.

Sin reigns in death. Sin is not here an act but a state. It is larger than the offense. By the offense sin entered the world and took possession of men. It is the state or disposition which prompts all overt acts and offenses. Grace is likewise not an act; acts do not reign. Behind the activities of grace there is a divine achievement and a gracious attitude. Behind the activities of sin there is a principle and an attitude hostile to God. It is from this evil state that the saint seeks deliverance.

Sin’s reign is not, as some versions say, unto death. It reigns in the kingdom of death. This, of course, is not physical death alone, for the reign of sin over men begins with their birth and brings them to physical death. Physical death is an illustration and a figure of the spiritual deadness which characterizes the old humanity. This death is a province which sin has won for herself, and she has the loyal support of her subjects. The saddest and most conclusive proof of her sway is our unconsciousness, hard to be broken, of our bondage to sin’s tyranny.

Thus also grace should be reigning. Grace not only superexceeds sin but occupies a super-throne. Sin is enthroned in the hearts of sinners, but grace occupies the throne of the universe, the throne of God. The Judge is seated on a throne of grace. And the saving grace of God has made its advent to all humanity, proclaiming peace to all.

Will the sway of grace ever be as effective and widespread as that of sin? Sin still reigns over the majority of men; the creation itself is subject to vanity, and saints still sigh for complete deliverance from her tyranny. The future belongs to grace. The divine intention is that grace should
Grace Reigns through Righteousness

be reigning even as sin reigns. Reigns is a timeless verb; should be reigning is future. How shall grace reign? How does sin reign? Thus also shall be the reign of grace. Sin is a usurper, but she has law on her side, for “the power of sin is the law” (1 Cor.15:56). But grace has satisfied law, she has invaded the domain of sin, and as she wrests from the usurper her victims she says to them, “Sin shall not be mastering you, for you are not under law, but under grace” (6:14). Every conversion to God, every resurrection rescues the subjects of sin. From the great stress laid on the superexcess of grace and the thus also of the comparison we may rightly infer that the victory of grace will be universal. That fact was positively stated in verses 18,19; the present text assures that grace has authority and power sufficient to break the stubbornest heart. Either sin or the Saviour must perish in this duel to the death. They will never agree to divide the spoils of battle.

Grace shall reign through righteousness for etonian life. Varied but accurate use of prepositions is a characteristic of Paul’s writing. Note the through and for. The reign of grace is not in righteousness, which would be so if righteousness meant our justification, but through righteousness, which means the righteousness of God which He manifested at the cross. The issue of the reign is etonian life. The claims of law and justice have been satisfied and righteousness has enthroned grace, so that it can confer etonian life on the enslaved subjects of sin. The present evil state of the world is to be rectified on divine, that is to say righteous, principles. Grace rests on foundations of impregnable righteousness, but sin sits on a tottering throne vainly seeking her support from law, which has been honored and satisfied in the highest tribunal. Thus sinners are rescued by a God Whose methods are moral, a holy God Who does justice and judgment at any cost to Himself.

This was wrought through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Grace

and Through Jesus Christ

is through Jesus Christ, Who vindicated God’s righteousness at the cross. Through God’s righteousness and through the obedience of Jesus Christ the reign of grace has begun.

Grace is possible only through the cross. And the cross demonstrates at once God’s love of sinners and his hatred of sin. It solves a great problem. How can the love of God consent to the hopeless destruction of the sinner? On the other hand, how can the justice of God save him? God, like His Son, “loves righteousness and hates injustice.” He loves a world of sinners, but He also loves justice. He will not save at the cost of righteousness! Thus God’s attributes are parted by sin. A reconciliation needed to be effected between love and righteousness, between mercy and truth. This reconciliation of the claims of love and righteousness in God was effected at the cross. Grace is through the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus. It is the going forth of all that is in Deity in a saving quest of sinning humanity. Grace is a synthesis of all the divine attributes; it is the reconciliation of all attitudes to the sinner. In grace divine righteousness is as favorable to the sinner as the divine love.

Grace is for life etonian, and life is the inclusive gift. It is the impartation of the life of Christ, which frees from the law of sin and of death. Grace will enthrone in life those who obtain it (17). These, first of all, are the elect who will reign for the ages, partners of the mediatorial reign of Christ, and exhibits of the transcendent riches of His grace (Eph.2:7).

There is a dispensational aspect of the reign of grace which satisfies the even as fully. Sin reigns in the death of all. Grace shall reign thus also over all men. Grace shall become as actually effective as sin is. Even now the dominion of sin is shrinking. This economy of grace has been longer in duration than the others. In the next two ages innumerable multitudes of the saints on earth and in
heaven will enjoy eonian life and complete deliverance from sin and death. But there is an administration of untrammeled grace, in which grace shall reign over all mankind as she does not now, and that reign will be for eonian life to the exclusion of death.

The eon succeeding the great white throne judgment will probably exceed in duration all the eons during which sin reigns in death. It is God's dependable habit to shorten the eras of wrath and to lengthen the eras of grace. The last eon will be an era of unmixed grace.

The reign of grace brings eonian life to men. There will be no revolt, all will be subjected to the Son. Even the denizens of the underworld shall bow the knee in the name of Jesus before the consummation (Phil.2:10). Sin shall not only be dethroned but repudiated by God and man as a result of the reign of grace.

God's grace shall reign through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Over the buried name of Adam the glory of the name of Jesus flourishes. In that name the saints now bow, we acclaim Him Lord, our Lord, to the glory of God, the Father. We are in this respect a kind of first-fruits of His creatures. Christ Himself is the Firstfruit. If it was righteous to rouse the Sinbearer from the dead, it is righteous to be gracious to all for whom He died and rose again. If we know what grace is, we know what is God's chief glory, and we know that the destiny of man will be whatever most glorifies God.

The fortunes of grace are the fortunes of our Lord. We see not as yet all things subjected to Him, but we see Him crowned with glory and honor. Even so grace is enthroned but all are not yet her subjects. Grace will get all her rights whenever all things are subjected to Him.

George L. Rogers

(Abridged and edited from Unsearchable Riches, vol.22, pp.497-512.)
THE GRACE THAT SUPEREXCEEDS

Romans 5:12-21 is especially important in defining the place of Christ in the gospel of God. If we can see how absolutely central and essential He is in the message we are believing we will be saved from much wretchedness (cf Rom.7:24,25).

Our place in the gospel is first defined in Romans 1:18-3:20. It is summed up in Romans 3:23. We are infirm, irreverent sinners, at enmity toward God (Rom.5:6-10), and reigned over by the tyrannizing power of death within (Rom.5:12,14,17). When it comes to righteousness and peace we can only be obtainers, and this is what we are in God's grace, through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.5:11,17).

Yet we do have a place of participation in the gospel which will come before us in gripping detail in chapter 6. We died together with Christ, being identified with Him in His death and entombment, with the expectation that we shall be living together with Him also (Rom.6:2-11). This is a matter of faith, not of works, a spiritual operation, invisible, but powerful in us who are believing.

But now we are focusing on our need of the gospel, the message of God's glorious achievement through His Son. Here we stand with all mankind, infirm sinners, irreverent offenders, wholly dependent on God's grace in Christ Jesus.

THE GRACE OF GOD

The grace of God (cf Rom.5:15) is the grace which justifies through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). It is God's righteous achievement of justifi-
Adam and Christ

cration of sinners as they are identified with the faith of Jesus (Rom. 3:26). Though given to us when we believe, it is not grounded on our faith, but on Christ's faith. Consequently, it debars human boasting, for it is apart from works of law (Rom. 3:27, 28).

God's grace is the realm in which we stand before Him, not only in being justified by Christ's faith, but also in being conciliated through His death as the Son of God (Rom. 5:1-11). Here we may be having peace toward God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we may be glorying in expectation of the glory of God (Rom. 5:1, 2).

This is not of ourselves, but God's achievement in Christ (cp Eph. 2:8-10). It is in view of the fact that we are sinners (and still remain sinners until we are constituted righteous when we are vivified in Christ) that Christ died for our sakes (Rom. 5:8). God's grace as announced in His evangel concerning His Son is one hundred percent pure. It is not diluted or polluted by any contributions from us who are constituted sinners; it is operative only through the obedience of the One, Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:19).

Therefore, in the context of Romans 5, to speak of God's grace is to speak of His evangel concerning His Son. It is not enough to think of God's grace in terms centered only on what He graciously gives us. It is to be perceived, first of all, in terms of what God has graciously done in the giving up of His Son. For that grace, the favor of God's doing in and through His Son, is the basis of the favor of our obtaining of justification and peace toward God and reigning in life.

**TWO INDIVIDUALS AND TWO ACTS**

Throughout Romans 5:12-21 Paul focuses our attention on two individuals, the one man, Adam, and the One Man, Jesus Christ. What he says about the "many" who compose "all mankind" is welded to what he says about Adam and and How they Affect us

Christ. These two are unique in that all others are critically affected by them.

Yet, furthermore, what Paul says about these two individuals is focused on two acts.

The first is Adam's one particular act of sinning, committed in the garden, bringing offense to God and introducing the reign of death over all mankind. And the second (which is the main point at issue) is Jesus Christ's one particular act of faith and obedience carried out on the Place of the Skull, resulting in the display of the glory of God's righteousness and love for all the many descendants of Adam. Both of these acts stand distinct from all other acts, affecting all mankind apart from any contributory act of any other person. What is said about the many acts of sinners and implied about the future acts of the many individuals of humanity when they are constituted righteous is viewed as they result from the two acts, first that of Adam and then that of Christ, which is superexcessively effective and good.

These two, singularly decisive acts are still uppermost in view in Romans 5:20. But now they are seen in relation to law. It is certainly so that much of Scripture is occupied by law, and this shapes our understanding of God. How, therefore, are we to relate the revelation of God provided by the evangel of His grace to that given through Moses?

**ROMANS 5:20**

*Yet* law *came in by the way,*  
*that the offense should be increasing,*  
*Yet where the sin increases,*  
*the grace superexceeds,*

Law came in by the way. "It was not a normal necessity, nor did it make any vital change. Its effect was to alter the character of sin so that it became an offense. Just as Adam's
Law Cannot Stop Sin

sin was against God's expressed command, and thus was a personal affront to God as well as a misdeed bringing harm on his own head, so those under the law, by sinning against light, greatly increased the sinfulness of sin.\(^1\)

Rather than leading to righteousness, law put the spotlight on sin (cf Rom.3:20), and increased the offense. Yet in doing so it intensifies the glory of what Christ has done. The absence of law from Adam to Moses did not stop the effects of Adam's sin (Rom.5:13,14). Death continued to reign over humanity, bringing each one downward in irreverence and unrighteousness (cf Rom.1:18). The giving of the law not only failed to stop these effects but even magnified their calamity. Our desperate need of a Saviour Who will save apart from human input is thus underlined by law.

Altogether the history of humanity, whether under law or not, illuminates the necessity and glory of the cross of Christ and of its grace. Yet those under the law, even Moses himself, stand before us in special testimony to its impotence to rid us of sin. David's heart was directed to God, but in his flesh he transgressed against the law and could only plead in his wretchedness: "Be gracious to me, O Elohim, according to Your benignity" (Psa.51:1). Now to Paul, God has committed His evangel concerning His Son, which announces grace even beyond David's daring hope (cp Gal.1:6,11,12; 2 Tim.2:8).

Hence, Paul testifies (1 Tim.1:14,15),

The grace of our Lord overwhelsm[s], with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all welcome, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, foremost of whom am I.

God's grace is not simply one approach among many—one of several methods of dealing with irreverent and

Grace must Stand Alone

unrighteous humanity, including appeal to conscience and nature (cf Rom.2:14,15) and the granting of the law to Israel (cf Rom.2:17). These cannot lead to justification in God's sight and to glory and honor and peace in the day of God's just judgment, as Romans 3:9-20 makes clear. The effect of Adam's sin is too devastating and certain upon the human race. Death reigns within the flesh of us all. Grace is the one, divine way of operation which securely and finally establishes righteousness. And it alone faithfully reflects the heart of God.

Grace says, “While we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes.” Law says, “You shall” do this, and “you shall not” do that. Grace tells us what Christ has done, and law instructs us on what we must do and what we must not do. For Paul there is no mixing of the two in the evangel of God. While he sustained the law in its proper sphere (Rom.3:31), and as an expression of God's just standards for human behavior (cf Rom.8:4), he is excluding law from the message of grace which he was heralding; he is not seeking to find a way to bring them together. Grace must stand alone as God's giving and God's achievement, through Christ.

THE OFFENSE

"The offense is that offense already mentioned four times (verses 15,17,18). The 'many offenses' (16) are regarded as a multiplication of the offense of Adam."\(^2\) The offense is the sin of Adam which brought offense to God in that it was disobedience to His word. Yahweh Elohim had said, "From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you must not eat from it." And then He added the explanation for this restrictive instruction: ". . . for, on the day you eat from it, to die you shall be dying" (Gen.2:17).

Adam did eat of that fruit, and on the very day that he

\(^1\) A. E. Knoch: CONCORDANT COMMENTARY, p.235.

The Effect of Grace

ate he began to die. This process, tyrannizing over him so that he kept failing to attain to righteousness, continued until he was dead. It was the same for Eve, and for everyone of their descendants. “Thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned” (Rom.5:12).

THE GRACE

If the words “the offense” and “the sin” refer to the one specific act of Adam as it affects God and mankind, the words “the grace” may also be understood as a summation of the evangel which states first that Christ died, and second that this was for our sins.

All that this passage says about Adam enlightens us as to Christ, either by points of similarity or by points of difference, even direct antithesis. In setting the offense and its effects before us in uncompromising clarity, the apostle Paul directs our hearts to the priceless favor of the righteous act of Jesus Christ on our behalf, and its effects. And whereas the offense of Adam direly affects every single human being, the grace of God in the giving of His Son, Who died for sinners, shall joyously affect every single human being. There is a balance in this, but Paul would have us see there is no balance in the power and intensity of the effects. Where sin, as a multiplication of Adam’s sin, increases, grace superexceeds as the supremely powerful and effective outworking of Christ’s righteous act of obedience.

GRACE SUPEREXCEEDS

The religious human in me wants to say, “Hush, Paul! It is exceedingly good news that where sin increases, grace superexceeds. But it is dangerous to let just anyone know this. It may easily be misunderstood as antinomianism (against-law-ism), as though to say we can indulge ourselves in all sorts of immorality and still stand in grace, justified in supereceeds that of Sin

God’s sight and conciliated before Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. The evangel of God’s grace does say exactly that, of course, but should we not use a little discrimination in heralding it? I mean some people are always ready for any excuse to do the wrong thing. There is no need to shout this message of saving grace from the housetop.

But in accord with the measure of faith God grants to me, the believer in me avows, “The evangel of God concerning His Son is truth, and it is truth wholly unlike law, which cannot stop sin in the flesh, and only increases the offense.

The fact is that, as to my flesh, I am in the same boat as those “some people” I was talking about. Yet this evangel being evangelized in Romans 3:21-8:39 announces God’s righteousness and love in justifying me by His grace through the faith-obedience of Jesus Christ, apart from any requirements of works set upon me. It tells of God’s conciliation of me, the enemy, and this granted through the death of His beloved Son at the hands of those under law, both that of Sinai and that which was the epitome of civil authority among the nations.

I was not there, but what was displayed there of the human spirit, of human pride, stupidity and weakness expresses exactly what is in me. You are right, Paul! In the grace of God I am what I am, identified with Christ in His death and resurrection, holy and flawless in God’s sight. Thus this eagerness of mine to bring this evangel! Not ashamed am I of this evangel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing!”

Where sin increases, grace superexceeds!

Where Adam’s offense grows larger due to my own contributions in failure and irreverence to its offensiveness, the grace of God and the gratuity of grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, still comes out on top! What Christ has done puts an end to what Adam has done and
The Superexceeding of Joy

brings in righteousness for all. Herald this word! Stand by it, opportunely, inopportune这项， expose, rebuke, entreat, with all patience and teaching! (2 Tim.4:2).

How beautiful are the feet of those bringing such an evang of superabundant good and overwhelming grace! (cf Rom.10:15; Isa.52:7; 1 Tim.1:14,15).

THE JOY OF GRACE

The superexceeding of the grace is a superexceeding of JOY. God’s joy in giving His Son for me, the sinner, Christ’s joy in obedience to the death of the cross, and my joy in obtaining what I so gravely need and in coming to know God as God. And it is a superexceeding of power. God’s power for salvation from indignation into future participation in the glory of God, and salvation even now as it operates with spiritual invigoration.

D.H.H.

APART FROM LAW

When the truth for today is presented to us by Paul in Romans, it is not based on law, but on the failure of law. The great point here is that we have come to the end of the law. God has demonstrated that there is nothing in the law by which to attain salvation or blessing. That is not so with the Circumcision. God still keeps on in the kingdom eon with the law in order to make His demonstration complete. God limited His law to only a small people. Later on He actually writes the law upon the hearts of His people, and even that does not bring in perfection. When we come to the end of the dispensation of law and to the time when Paul begins to write, we have a divine righteousness entirely apart from law.

I thank God that, early in my experience as a believer, I was led to make a study of Romans. On this point Paul’s evang is radically different from what the Circumcision apostles had for Jews and proselytes. Paul brings us the blazing brightness of God’s greatest grace both as luminary and as a vital power to enable us to live far above the thunders of the law.

A.E.K.

(Excerpted from Unsearchable Riches, vol.37, p.256.)
THE GRACE THAT REIGNS

ROMANS 5:21 completes the comparison between Adam and Christ which was begun in verse 12 and had reached a climax in verses 18 and 19. But now “the Sin” refers, not directly to the sin of Adam itself, but to the effect of Adam’s sin as it rules over us. This effect of Adam’s sin is personified. Because of what Adam did, this insidious power called Sin reigns in death. But because of what Christ did, Grace, as God’s power for salvation, shall1 be reigning through righteousness.

Where sin increases, grace superexceeds . . .
that, even as Sin reigns
in death,
thus Grace also should be reigning
through righteousness,
for life conian,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

SIN REIGNS IN DEATH

The AV rendering, “sin hath reigned unto death” may express a fact, but it does not convey to us what Paul is saying here in this context. As at the end of verse 12, “Death” is distinguished here as the ongoing “dying” process of Gen-

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1. The aorist subjunctive verb, “should be reigning,” often conveys a sense similar to a future indicative, “shall be reigning,” as it does here where the certain and evident effect Adam’s sin is set in comparison with the effect of Christ’s work of grace. There is no sense of doubt involved in either case.
They Tyranny of Death in us

esis 2:17. In verse 12 Paul says that “death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned.” This opens the comparison with Christ, Whose one just act was for all mankind leading ultimately to life’s justifying. And now Paul says that as, “Sin reigns in death [traced back to Adam],” Grace will reign through righteousness [as it is traced to Christ] for life onian.

Death as the condition of dying has passed through the generations descended from Adam, entering into all mankind, reigning over us all so that we sin in this infirmity. Thus Sin reigns in us whose lives are diminishing and distorted, whose lives are dying lives.

When we see this we are ready for “thus Grace also.”

THE REIGN OF GRACE

Even as Sin reigns in death with power and effectiveness, so Grace shall be reigning in the lives of humanity. At present this reign has begun to operate within us who believe the evangel that Christ died for our sins. The evangel of grace is the power of God for salvation to everyone who is believing (Rom.1:16). The righteous effect of the faith of Jesus Christ has already come on all who are believing (Rom.3:22). As previously noted, this theme of the power of God’s grace will be developed in chapter 6.

Christ’s death for sinners is the dynamic means God uses to save sinners. Christ died for all; consequently all will ultimately enjoy the salvation procured by Christ. But even now, in accord with this, the message of Christ’s death for sinners is itself packed with power for those who are believing it.

“The law, indeed, is holy, and the precept holy and just and good,” as Paul testifies in Romans 7:12. But he adds, “The law is spiritual, yet I am fleshly” (Rom.7:14). “Consequently, I am finding the law that, at my willing to be doing the ideal, the evil is lying beside me. For I am grad-

The Joy of Grace over us

ified with the law of God as to the man within, yet I am observing a different law in my members, warring with the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. A wretched man am I! what will rescue me out of this body of death? Grace! I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Rom.7:21-25).

THE EVANGEL OF GRACE

Grace removes us from wretchedness. How is this? Grace is the message that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sins. Our sins have been dealt with, once and for all time (cf Rom.6:10), not by our efforts or sufferings but by what Christ did and suffered. This was the working out of the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ directed by the requirements of God’s righteousness and love. Grace is the message that this was done for us as sinners, whether we struggle as Saul of Tarsus did, striving to uphold the law, or like Cain (Jude 11), going our own way apart from consideration of God’s instructions. Law tells us to do what we cannot do in the flesh. Grace tells us what God has done in and through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Here alone is happiness and peace, and here alone is power for salvation in spirit at present, and with full realization in the future.

Grace reigns in the life of the believer. Grace tells us that we died to sin, that we have become planted together in the likeness of Christ’s death, that our old humanity was crucified together with Him (Rom.6:2,5,6). This cannot be undone. Furthermore, Grace tells us that, without doubt and no matter what, we shall be of the resurrection also, living together with Christ and living to God (Rom.6:5,8,11). This is certain, and it is its certainty that powerfully works within us for good.

We are not ashamed of this message which speaks the truth concerning our failure and weakness and God’s successful and powerful grace. Power lies in truth, and the
The Righteousness of God

The truth is that in the grace of God Christ has died for our sins, and in this the sinner has died, along with every sin.

To repeat: The reign of grace has already begun, though as an earnest, a spiritual operation in the hearts and lives of believers (cf Eph.1:13). It will be operative with full realization in the oncoming eons when we are conformed to the body of Christ’s glory. Israel, too, will know the power of grace in the new creation. But we also see that Romans 5:20,21 immediately arises out of verses 18 and 19, where the evangel of what Christ did is related to the needs of all who have been affected by Adam’s disobedience. If Christ has died for us, it follows that He died for all. Therefore, the grace of God’s gift of His Son to the death of the cross, and the grace of its superabounding effects, will grow and grow until it reigns in full experience in the lives of everyone. All mankind and all the wrongs and hurts, all the disappointments and failures of all mankind will ultimately be transformed by God under the reign of grace.

THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS

Sin reigns in death. This tells us of the realm in which Sin reigns.

Grace shall reign through righteousness. This tells us of the means for the reign of Grace. It certainly is so that the reign of Grace will be in the realm of righteousness (as well as the realm of justified life). But once again Paul points us to the basic evangel of God concerning His Son, to the righteousness of God as it is manifest in the faith of Jesus Christ. Here, our apostle is not so much concerned with where we are going as to how we get there.

The reign of grace comes about through righteousness. If we have been following what Paul says about righteousness in this epistle we will understand that he is speaking, first of all, of God’s righteousness revealed, manifested and displayed through the faith of Jesus Christ (Rom.

Life Unencumbered by Death

1:17; 3:21,22,25,26), and not through our works or even our faith or faithfulness. In this we see the standard of His righteousness which cannot and will not be compromised by death and sin, or shared with self-satisfying contributions of dying sinners. And here we see the power of God’s grace which righteously rids the world of death and sin.

God’s grace exceeds the righteousness displayed in God’s judgments. Like the righteousness of judgment the righteousness of God’s grace in Christ does not overlook any sin and offense (cf Rom.2:16; 5:16). But, unlike the righteousness of judgment it deals righteously with every act of irreverence and unrighteousness in such a way that all shall righteously be constituted righteous.

FOR LIFE EONIAN

God’s grace leads to life. We have seen that it brings life with a purpose, a vocation, a place of usefulness. Those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall (whenever they do obtain this grace) be reigning in life (Rom.5:17). This is the grand development of the words of Genesis 1:26-28 which Christ’s death for sinners brings about. We have also seen that God’s grace leads to life in which the experiences of the present life under the reign of death are justified (Rom.5:18). Now we see that God’s grace leads to life freed from every element of death and decay. With the words, “eonian life,” Paul recalls Genesis 3:22-24 where Yahweh Elohim barred the slowly dying Adam and Eve from the garden lest they eat of the tree of life “and live for the eon.” Because of the operation of death in them, a life of continually increasing infirmity with no end in sight would only increase misery and despair for the human pair. In contrast to this, because of God’s grace and under its reign, there shall be a life unencumbered by death, in which the knowledge of good and evil will be a blessing to the glory of God.
The Grace of God’s Giving

For us who are believing the evangel this will be life already in the oncoming eons in which we will be reigning, enjoying its justification and living to God (cf Eph.2:7). But this special experience of eonian life does not exclude the rest of mankind from its enjoyment, for there will be “an administration of the complement of the eras” in which God’s will and purpose and delight to head up all in the Christ will be fully realized, in which we will have a special part (Eph.1:9-12,22,23). Because of God’s grace in the giving of His Son for sinners, there will ultimately be life for all, life uncontaminated and unrestricted by death and sin. This will be when death is abolished and all are vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:24-27), when every knee shall be bowing and every tongue shall be acclamining that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil.2:10,11). Thereafter, Christ, as God’s beloved Son, to Whom God subjects all, will subject Himself to God, that God may be All in all (1 Cor.15:27,28).

All of this, what we have now in spirit, and what will come in the future speaks of the effect of grace. As such it is marvelous, superabounding in glory above all that we can imagine.

But Paul closes this section of Scripture in which he shares riches of spiritual grace by pointing again to the grace of God’s giving of His Son. For this grace and its reign comes about only “through Jesus Christ, our Lord.” God did what was impossible for us to do, sending His own Son in the likeness of sin’s flesh and concerning sin, He condemns sin the flesh (Rom.8:3). God spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all (Rom.8:32).

THE ONE CHANNEL OF GRACE

In Romans 5:12-21 Paul has said much about Adam and his one act of sinning and offense. But this is not his principal concern. Whatever has been recalled from the account of Genesis 2 and 3 is intended to aid in our appreciation of the evangel of God concerning His Son. What is said about Adam is said because it helps us greatly in understanding Christ and what He has done. God’s grace is channeled through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is to be seen in the death of Jesus, the Saviour, in His exalted position as the Christ, the Anointed One, and finally it is to be seen in His personal and endearing relationship to us as our Lord.

OUR LORD

The first person plural pronouns, we, us and our have not been used since Romans 5:11. Through this whole section of Romans 5:12-21 we are in view as part of “all mankind” and “the many,” as sinners and offenders, and then as obtainers of grace. Now at the very end of this extraordinary section of Scripture Paul addresses us once again in a personal way in association with himself. We are among “the called of Jesus Christ” along with those who first received this letter (Rom.1:7). We have a Lord, and this Lord is Jesus Christ. We are highly blessed among mankind, in that we are believing the evangel now, and in that, being now justified in Christ’s blood, and having now obtained God’s conciliation through the death of His Son, we have been brought under the Lordship of Jesus Christ even in our present lives as descendants of Adam.

Who, then, is our Lord? He is God’s Son, the Anointed One, Who came into the world to save sinners. And what He came to do, He did, although it has not yet been made manifest except to the eyes of the believer’s heart.

We could not save ourselves. We could not make ourselves righteous in the sight of God. We could not come before God in peace by our efforts. We could not make our lives conform to the standards set by God for mankind in Genesis 1:27. And we could not become acquainted with God as God, with His righteousness and love and grace and power and glory, nor bring true and lasting glory to
The Power of Grace for Joy

Him Who made us. But all of this and more of glory upon glory has been gained for us in grace, through the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

It is through Christ Jesus our Lord that Grace shall reign over humanity. God’s favor of righteousness and peace based on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is set to ascend the throne with power and authority over Adam and all his descendants. That is what shall be. But already, this grace of God and its gracious results have begun to rule in the lives of believers as they are believing. We already have come to recognize that Christ Jesus is our Lord, believing that while we are still sinners, He died for our sakes. We contributed nothing to this except to be sinners. Yet He died for our sakes, and we stand before God justified, enjoying access to His very presence, crying “Abba, Father,” with the expectation of all the goodness encompassed in the glory of God.

FOR OUR JOY AND PEACE

Here is our happiness, that happiness which the Galatians lost in being transferred in mind and focus from that which called them in the grace of Christ (cf Gal.1:6; 4:15). May Grace be reigning in us more and more for our joy and peace in believing (Rom.15:13).

D.H.H.

THE DESPOTISM OF GRACE

The absolute despotism of Grace is set forth in the startling suggestion of Romans 6:1 that if we should be persisting in sin, grace would increase. While the following argument is against persistence in sin, it confirms the sovereignty of grace. Let us not deny this marvelous doctrine. It will give us rich, exultant liberty, ridding us of the thralldom of Sin, and giving us power to avoid the very sins which unnatural logic supposes we would eagerly follow, now that there is no condemnation even if we should sin. 

A.E.K.
OVERWHELMING GRACE

At a meeting which we attended some years ago, the Chairman suddenly exclaimed, “I do not think I am saved.” But he did not say it quite like that, and he added something else. He said, “I do not think I am saved, I know I am saved.”

Now was that brother justified in making such a confident claim—in taking it for granted already that he was saved, irrespective of what trials and experiences might befall him in the future?

Yes, indeed, for he based his claim on his appreciation of the fact that he was saved “in grace,” and upon his assurance of the absolute despotism of that grace in its workings on his behalf.

THE ABSOLUTE DESPOTISM OF GRACE

Strictly speaking, this phrase is not (in its English form, at least) a scriptural expression, but it is most certainly a scriptural concept, a scriptural theme. We have, in fact, taken it, word for word, from the comment in the Concordant Commentary on the New Testament by A. E. Knoeh, on the first verse of Romans 6. What, then, is the meaning of “despotism”?

The dictionary defines a despot as “a ruler exercising or invested with absolute power in a state, irrespective of the wishes of those governed,” and a secondary definition is “a tyrant.” Similarly, despotism is defined as “absolute power: absolute government; arbitrary government.” Both of these words are derived from the Greek despotēs, which
is indeed a scriptural term, being several times translated in the AV as “lord” and “master,” and in the CV as “owner.” It is used of one, who has absolute possession of another, as the master of the slave. Look, for example, at 1 Timothy 6:1, “Whoever are slaves under the yoke, let them deem their own owners (despotês) worthy of all honor.”

An earthly despot is a ruler who, as far as he possibly can, works all things according to the counsel of his own will; who heeds not the wishes of his subjects if they are in any way contrary to his purpose; who is ruthless in carrying out his designs.

Man has a saying that “all power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” It never does for men to have too much power. They cannot bear it; it invariably turns their heads. The whole course of history goes to show that a man with absolute power soon becomes a tyrant. Only God can be trusted with absolute power. And why can we trust and rejoice in the fact that God has something that we dare not trust in a man? Simply because we know that God always does right. He is love.

**BUT GOD IS A DESPOT**

Paul, in Ephesians 1:11, speaks of “the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will,” and in Romans 9:19, he asks, “Who has withstood His intention?” Again, in 2 Chronicles 20:5,6, we read that “Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah in Jerusalem, at the House of Yahweh, before the new court, and he said: ‘O Yahweh Elohim of our fathers, are You not the Elohim of the heavens? You are ruling over all the kingdoms of the nations; vigor and mastery are in Your hand, and no one is able to stand up against You.’ Yes, God exercises a despotic sway over the whole universe, but we are thankful for this, because He is love, and because everything He does is so absolutely right. Though He will brook no opposition to the furtherance of His purpose, He is never a tyrant. If He inflicts evil upon any, it is always in order that good may follow. His sovereign will is the ultimate salvation and blessing of all, that He may be All in all.

As a Despot, **God demands one hundred per cent loyalty, one hundred per cent righteousness, one hundred per cent affection, from His subjects.** Back in Genesis, He formed Adam, and then Eve, an innocent pair in ideal surroundings, with whom He could walk and talk continually. But how much was needed to mar this happy state of communion? Only the eating of one piece of fruit.

**GOD’S STANDARD OF RIGHTeousNESS**

It is true that this constituted an act of disobedience to the direct command of God. But let us ask ourselves whether such a disobedience in one of our children would have resulted in more than very temporary consequences. We suggest that by the next day the offense would have been forgotten. To us, the apparent triviality of the offense demonstrates the principle that the slightest flaw is sufficient to mar the whole in God’s sight. The same principle was substantiated by Paul many centuries later when he said that “a little leaven is leavening the whole kneading” (1 Cor.5:6; Gal.5:9), and by James when he wrote, “For anyone who should be keeping the whole law, yet should be tripping in one thing, has become liable for all” (James 2:10).

Again, when God chose Israel to be His people, He designated them to be “a holy nation”—wholly for God—and anyone who defiled the nation by committing adultery was to be put to death—cut off from the people. The seventh day, too, was ordained to be a holy day, and anyone who failed to keep it holy to God, by working on that day for himself or his family, was likewise to be cut off. In the same manner, the sacrifices offered on the altar of the
God's Absolute Qualities

The tabernacle must be without blemish, and the officiating priests had to perform an elaborate ritual without mistake. All these things were examples, intended to demonstrate the absolute perfection of God's requirements. God's standard is one hundred per cent; ninety nine per cent will just not do.

HUMAN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Now we know that this absolute standard of perfection was quite unattainable as far as humanity was concerned. After declaring in Romans 3:10 that, "not one is just, not even one," Paul was constrained to add (in verses 19 and 20), "Now we are aware that, whatever the law is saying, it is speaking to those under the law, that every mouth may be barred, and the entire world may become subject to the just verdict of God, because, by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in His sight, for through law is the recognition of sin."

Here we have an impasse from which, humanly speaking, there is no way out. But with the next phrase, beginning "Yet now," Paul points to the solution to the dilemma "apart from law," though he stresses that there are no distinctions among humanity, "for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God."

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS, POWER AND JUSTICE

Having made, and emphasized, this last point, Paul is ready to reveal the solution to the problem, and it is a solution which is provided in its entirety by God, and owes nothing whatever to human worth or human endeavor. It is summarized in this phrase, which we should all know by heart, "Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom.3:24).

We have already seen how God lays down a standard of one hundred per cent. If He required this from us, we also

One Hundred percent Grace

expect it from Him. For example, God's standard of faithfulness is one hundred per cent, and we expect it to be so. For if (to use an ordinary expression) God lets us down on even a minor point—if He fails to keep faith with us on just a small issue—what guarantee would we have that He will keep His word with regard to more vital matters? God must be faithful in all things if we are to have full confidence in Him; and so, throughout the scriptures, He gives us example after example of His faithfulness, particularly in the fulfillment of prophecies made centuries before.

We also expect God to be all-powerful. If someone were able to thwart Him in a small matter, what surety would we have that He might not, sooner or later, be overcome in a major issue? If He is not Almighty, Omnipotent, Supreme, where is the basis of our expectation? And again, if He is not all-wise and omnipotent, where is the assurance that He will be able to settle all the problems of mankind and of the universe to the ultimate satisfaction of all?

All of us agree that God's justice, too, is above reproach, and God Himself is zealous to ensure that He shall be seen both as "just" and as "a Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus" (Rom.3:26). Man's sense of justice, or, at least, of apparent justice, is generally much more acute than some of his other feelings. He is keen to sense an injustice, often, indeed, where there is no injustice. Many a sincere student of God's Word will not subscribe to the theme of the absolute despotism of grace for fear that he may be accused of offending the absolute justice of God.

GOD'S GRACE

Yet, if man demands one hundred per cent displays of God's justice, and of His power, and of His faithfulness, ought he not also demand and expect to find somewhere a hundred per cent demonstration of His grace, which is an expression of His love? If we may not permit the
Not of our Works

The slightest flaw in God’s examples of holiness, or the smallest weakness in His displays of power, or the least lapse in His promises of faithfulness, shall we not expect at some time, a total, complete, all-comprehensive manifestation of His grace? We believe, surely, that the saints of today are among those through whom God has chosen to make this supreme demonstration, and that our salvation is due, not ninety-nine per cent to the grace of God, and one tiny per cent to our own efforts, but one hundred per cent to His grace.

Paul writes, in Ephesians 2:8-10, “For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God’s approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For HIS ACHIEVEMENT are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them.”

THE DISPLAY OF GOD’S GRACE

Our salvation is God’s opportunity to show forth something that otherwise He would not be able to display so completely. Grace has been defined as “a benefit bestowed on one who deserves the opposite,” and, as such, is an entirely unmerited favor, to be perfectly displayed in us, members of the ecclesia which is Christ’s body, in transforming us from unworthy sinners to glorious likenesses of our Lord and Head. Add one iota of merit to our part in this transaction, and we take away something from the perfection of grace, which is operating on our behalf.

If, then, this grace is to be displayed in us in all its grandeur, it must be entirely removed from any suggestion of works, for, as Paul tells us in Romans 4:4, “to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt.” In other words, when we work, we earn our wages. If we are allowed to work for our salvation, to that extent we earn it, and it is no longer entirely of grace. Therefore Paul says, “in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you, it is God’s approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting” (Eph.2:8).

But surely, someone might say, “works come into it somewhere. what does it say here? ‘For his achievement are we being created in Christ for good works.’ This is where works come in.”

How should we meet such a criticism? The answer is easy. We should reply, “You should have quoted the whole passage, which reads, ‘For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them.’”

So these are really God’s works, not ours. How can they be ours when they are made ready beforehand?

WHAT OF FAITH?

“But surely,” someone else may object, “we may at least claim credit for believing? After all, comparatively few people have real faith in God. Does not that count for something?”

Regarding such an argument, A. E. Knoch writes, “Faith has not the least merit. We do not deem it meritorious to believe an honest man. It is no effort. It does no work. It is the simplest, easiest, freest channel God could choose to convey His righteousness to us. Let us exult in His explanation that it is of faith that it may accord with grace.”

“In grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God’s approach present.”

The fact is that no one can come to God of his own free will. No man can come to the Father except through Jesus, Who is “The way, the Truth and the Life;” and no one can come to Jesus except he first be drawn by the Father (John 14:6 and 6:44). Paul tells us in Romans 12:3 that “God parts to each the measure of faith.”

God Undertakes and Completes

OUR WILLINGNESS

Now a third argument is brought forward, the flesh being so loath to admit its utter impotence in the matter, and still desiring to claim a little credit for our salvation. “You must concede,” the contention comes, “that we were willing to receive the faith when it was parted to us. We might have rejected it. Surely we can claim some credit for this?”

What does Paul say in Philippians 2:12,13? “With fear and trembling, be carrying your own salvation into effect, for it is God, Who is operating in you to will as well as to work for the sake of His delight.” So that when God brought to our notice this gift of salvation in grace, He operated in our minds to make us embrace it! Recall Paul’s prayer for the Philippians, “I am thanking my God at every remembrance of you, always, in every petition of mine for you all, making the petition with joy, for your contribution to the evangel from the first day until now, having this same confidence, that He Who undertakes a good work among you, will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil.1:3-6). Yes, from the very first day, God undertook a good work among us.

GRATUITOUSLY IN GRACE

All these thoughts bring us to Paul’s message of Romans 3:24, “Being justified gratuitously in His grace.” What is the meaning of “gratuitously”?

In John 15:25 the same word is used in the expression, “They hate me gratuitously.” The AV rendering is, “They hated Me without a cause.”

Apart from their own pride and jealousy, there was no reason for the Jews to have hated the Lord. Jesus had given them no cause for offense. He had preached to them the good news of the kingdom, and had supplemented this with miraculous blessings—the feeding of their hungry ones, the healing of their sick and even the raising of their dead. But in spite of all these, they hated Him—without a cause.

Similarly, God has loved us without a cause in ourselves. Why should God have chosen us to be recipients of so great a gift of salvation, when, in spirit realms, He might have found some worthy of honor and reward? The answer is, again that we are saved in order that grace might be displayed in absolute perfection; and, for this to be, it means that we, the recipients of this grace, must have been entirely unworthy of such a favor.

The plain fact is that every one of us came into the category of those described in the early chapters of Romans as having “sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.” How much wanting matters not; many of us must have fallen far short of God’s standards, but even a slight blemish would be sufficient to mar us in the eyes of Him Who has chosen us to be “holy and flawless in His sight” (Eph.1:4). How is it possible for us to attain such a state of perfection in God’s eyes? Only by His grace, which allows Him to look at us through Christ, Who has become to us “wisdom from God, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance” (1 Cor.1:30). In looking at us through Him, God is able to see “what is not as if it were (Rom.4:17), and we, who in ourselves are frail and faulty, are seen by Him as “holy and flawless and unimpeachable” (Col.1:22).

GRACE SUPEREXCEEDS

But Paul, in Romans 5:20,21, carries us further, and shows us that, where sin is great, grace is greater; that “where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.” In Ephesians 1:7,8, the same apostle speaks of “the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His (God’s) grace, which He latives on us.” Grace never stops short;
it is not given sparingly; on the contrary, it is spoken of as “superexceding,” and as being “lavished on us.”

If ever we feel like saying, with Paul, “A wretched man am I! What will rescue me out of this body of death?” the answer should assuredly be that one word grace, which is regrettably omitted from the AV, but is in the original Greek. Grace will rescue us; grace that will not be thwarted; grace which is despotic in its determination to carry us through to that great salvation for which we have been designated beforehand. When God designated us right back before the disruption of the world to be conformed to the image of His Son, He had in mind that great provision of grace which was to operate on our behalf. Paul in 2 Timothy 1:9,10 speaks of God “Who saves us and calls us with a holy calling, not in accord with our acts, but in accord with His own purpose and the grace which is given to us in Christ Jesus before times etoian, yet now is being manifested through the advent of our Sirour, Christ Jesus.” God did not choose us then to be failures. He did not choose us beforehand for some of us to fall out of the race. For all this we thank our God, through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom.7:25).

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD

To save us, God gave His choicest gift, His most treasured possession, that which He loved most. He gave that which was nearest to His own heart. And this prompted Paul to ask a very pertinent question, “Surely He Who spares not His own Son, but gives Him up for us all, how shall He not, together with Him, also, be graciously granting us all?” (Rom.8:32).

And so, continuing our reading of Ephesians 2, we learn that “God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us together in Christ (in grace are

you saved!) and rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus, that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For in grace, through faith, are you saved.”

Our so great a salvation is indeed in order that the grace of God may be displayed in all its perfection and glory, and not now only, but also throughout the oncoming eons. Its riches are transcendent. It lifts us from the lowest strata to the highest pinnacle; from earthly corruption to celestial incorruption; from mortality to immortality; from an earthly tabernacle in which we groan, to a glorious likeness of the Son of God Himself. Because of grace, we are transferred from a state of alienation from God to a position of sonship; from a condition of enmity to God to one in which nothing in the whole universe can separate us from His love; from a state in which everything in which all that we might do is a hindrance to His operations, to one in which all that He does in us is in glorious advancement of His purpose. Well might Paul refer to grace as God’s indescribable gratuity” (2 Cor.9:15).

When God conceived His purpose, He planned for its ultimate aim, the reconciliation of all to Himself; to be accomplished through Christ and the ecclesia which is His body, the complement by which He is completing the all in all (Eph.1:23; 3:21). To make sure that this complement should be perfect for the role designed for it, He determined that its growth and development should be entirely His achievement. He did not conceive the end without ensuring the means.

GRACE OVERWHELMS

In 1 Timothy 1:14, Paul says, “The grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.” In the scriptures, this is the only usage of the Greek word here
translated “overwhelm.” This shows the absolute superi-
ority of grace over opposing forces.

A while ago, we stood in a little boat at the very foot of
the Niagara Falls. The Canadian part of the falls is in the
form of a horseshoe; its brim is about 2,500 feet round, and
its height over 150 feet. Had the boat been able to venture
any nearer, it would surely have been overwhelmed by the
immense volume and force of the water descending upon
it from three sides. We backed off in awe at the majesty
of the scene, but with an enhanced understanding of the
meaning of the word ‘overwhelm.’

“The grace of our Lord overwhelms,” said Paul, and
when he wanted an instance to prove his point, he has only
to look at himself. He had been “a calumniator and a per-
secutor and an outrager” (1 Tim.1:13). He had locked up
many of the saints in jails, and had voted to have them put
to death (Acts 26:10). The case of Stephen was by no means
the only one in which he had connived in murder. He had
compelled many to blaspheme, and had persecuted them
as far as the outside cities (v.11). He had ravaged the eccle-
sia of God (Gal.1:13). Yet, in spite of all this, he could say,
“The grace of our Lord overwhelms, with faith and love in
Christ Jesus. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all wel-
come, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sin-
ners, foremost of whom am I. But therefore was I shown
mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ should be
displaying all His patience, for a pattern of those who are
about to be believing on Him for life etern.”

Let us all rejoice in the overwhelming power of God’s
grace, which, in spite of all that is lacking in ourselves will
surely carry us through—confirming us “until the con-
summation, unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus
Christ.” For faithful is God (on Whom it solely and wholly
depends), “through Whom we were called into the fellow-
ship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord” (1 Cor.1:8,9).

John H. Essex
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SEPTEMBER, 2011

Volume 102 Number 5
EDITORIAL

God’s righteousness and God’s grace are the principal themes of this issue of Unsearchable Riches. They are essential elements of the evangel of God concerning His Son, the well-message that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused from among the dead. In this welcome message we also learn of God’s wisdom and His power for salvation. And there also we come face to face with God’s love which acquaints us above all else with God and the glory of His ways.

Hence, our testimony is:

“It is the righteousness (i.e., justice) of God that is revealed, manifested, and displayed in the evangel of God, which is the evangel of the grace of God” (p.198).

“Evil is not essentially a penalty, but a preparation. It is humbling and revealing and necessary for the appreciation of good and of God” (p.210).

“We declare that God’s grace in the giving of His Son to the death of the cross for justification and peace and life is greater in effect and power over humanity than the sin of Adam” (p.226).

“The scene of our salvation is not in ourselves or our deeds, but in God’s [grace]. He is the One Who is working and even prepares the good works which we may do” (p.297).

Righteousness and grace, along with wisdom and power and love, are definitive qualities of God. This becomes apparent to us, not in what we see and experience now in our flesh, but in our believing of God’s evangel concerning His Son. 

D.H.H.
RIGHTHEOUSNESS REVEALED IN GRACE

Question:

What is presented in Scripture as God’s “grace,” is instead, actually His justice; it is God’s justice disguised as grace.

I am still surprised that Concordant continues to pass off grace as absolutely a disconnected state of mindless love with God. This is the way western Christianity has taught grace for eighteen hundred years: there is no reason for God to extend “grace” because humanity is unworthy, and therefore does not deserve to be rescued.

That’s the way Paul has been interpreted in his epistles on the subject of grace. Of course, it is possible that Paul was not given the full revelation of what grace means. All I know is that “the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly” (Rom. 8:20, AV).

This means that God set up the whole scenario of the “fall” in Eden. Therefore, if He comes along and says His love to us on the cross is of “grace” without one iota of worthiness in us, we must say that such “grace” is disconnected from God’s responsibility for sin. The problem with that is that we then become ones that were not worth dying for. God just pulled grace out of a hat in a blind state of agape [love] and threw it at us, like Solomon threw his eros-love at his harem.

The truth behind grace is the justice of God to become responsible for setting humanity up for the entrance of Satan in the garden. There was no way the naïve couple could have withstood the onslaught of the master of deception. God knew that. He even planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil right in the middle of the garden to make sure they wouldn’t miss it; then He took off!

Therefore, “grace” is a mask; it is a subterfuge simply for God’s justice, in which He rescues whom He first entrapped. We are worthy. This is to say: He ought to rescue us, since it is He Who entrapped us, having first of all ensured our waywardness by giving us sinful hearts.

If I place a one hundred dollar bill on the table, put a sign on my lawn that it’s there, go off and leave the house unlocked, return to find the money gone, then report the theft to the police, I am the one who is responsible for the theft, ultimately. This is why reconciliation of the all is the final responsibility of God, because He will then own up to the fact of (at least) ninety percent of all humans not knowing Him.

By my not filing charges against the thief, both the police and the thief will get the impression that I am infinitely gracious, whereas the truth is that, unknownst to anyone else, I had actually arranged conditions so as to lure the thief into performing his thiev- ery, thus entrapping him in his wrongdoing.

In such case, then, in which I decline to file charges against the thief, it’s not actually that I am being gracious to him, but that, in light of my own acts of allurement and entrapment which prompted and induced his behavior, I am merely acting justly toward him. After all, I’m the one who encouraged and prompted his wrongful behavior in the first place—the scenario for which I had encouraged, as a test for the thief.

In the case of God, the situation is even more serious. That is, in consideration of the sinful acts of His creatures, it is not only that He allures and entraps us into sin by placing us into the environment of this evil world in which we find ourselves with all of its advertisements and enticements of wickedness, but that He first of all constituted us sinners and made us flesh—giving us carnal minds which are at enmity

Claims of Divine Subterfuge

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against Him, minds that are “not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom.8:7).

I understand that Concordant cannot teach this in its graphic form because it makes Paul a little wilted and it provokes outrage to consider God cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us. He had to hide behind grace because He knew humans would not understand. Maybe that includes Concordant.

Realize that in my words above such as where I speak of, in Scripture, God’s justice (or righteousness) being “disguised as grace,” even as of His “cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us,” I intend these words in a benign sense. I am not accusing God or accusing Concordant. I realize these are words loaded with negative overtones. For that I apologize.

Answer:

I APPRECIATE that in speaking as you do, in various ways and places, of such things as of God’s having “cook[ed] up a conspiracy of evil against us,” you “intend [such] words in a benign sense,” not in an accusatory sense. Even so, since, as you yourself acknowledge, such language “pro-\(\text{voke}\)s outrage,” and, as I explain below, either leads to or at least does nothing to obviate misperception of vital truth, I think it is far better that it not be used.

I appreciate, too, your not taking the usual man-exalting stand here, either in your description of the Edenic scene, or in your consideration of the human condition, according to which you view the old humanity as it truly is: corrupt in accord with its seductive desires (Eph.4:22), and crooked in its heart, being mortally ill therein (Jer.17:9; cp 13:23), from which, however awful they may be, spring the outflowings of life (Prov.4:23b).

Even so, I wonder how acquainted you actually are with our views. We are far from declaring, or any of our teachings entailing, that God’s grace is at all, much less “absolu-\(\text{tely a disconnected state of mindless love.’ To the contrary, we see God’s grace as being vitally connected to His intelligence, founded upon His love, and a manifestation of His righteousness. According to the evan-}\)gel, it is not that grace is a “disguise” of justice, but that grace is a revelation of justice, of what Justice is, and of what It will do.

The view of “western Christianity” for eighteen hundred years has indeed been that there is “no reason” for God to extend grace to sinners, since humans, being so sinful, are therefore unworthy (both in the sense of undeservedness and of worthlessness) of being saved. God’s own responsibility for the human condition and state of affairs among men is either denied and rejected, or else, at most, only tepidly and inconsistently formally acknowledged, while in the end practically denied and repudiated, even so.

In contrast to any such views, however, we declare that the more sinful a man may be, the more he becomes a fit object of God’s saving grace. We likewise are mindful that, rather than any of God’s creatures being worthless to Him which He therefore would discard, the creation was sub-\(\text{jected to vanity, not voluntarily, “but because of Him Who subjects it, in expectation that the creation itself, also, shall be freed from the slavery of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom.8:20,21).}

We wish neither to think nor say anything at all as to what God “ought to” do with His creatures, whether in view of their sinfulness or otherwise. Even so, we are convinced that He is fond of humanity (Titus 3:4; cp Rev.3:19), and that “Christ came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15), it being the case that God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him (John 3:17).

Contrary to orthodoxy, we base salvation upon the blood of Christ alone, and the blood of Christ upon the gratuitous grace of God alone. Any notion of what one “deserves”
(and therefore “ought” to receive as one’s “just deserts”) is something that we would not presume, much less would found upon our own ethical notions of rectitude. To these, whatever their perceptions may be, we wish to give the least possible attention and not even the smallest portion of our trust.

Our view is, “Righteous is Yahweh in all His ways, and benign in all His works” (Psa.145:17). We would not presume, then, to say what God must do if He would do right, but rather that whatever He does, is what is right.

I should like to state that I too am strongly convinced of the ultimate responsibility of God for all things, out of Whom, through Whom, and for Whom is all (Rom.11:36; 1 Cor.8:6), the God Who makes the world and all that is in it, giving to all life and breath and all (Acts 17:24,25). I trust it is the case as well that I hold this conviction without either equivocation or inconsistency.

Our primary theme, in fact, is that it is the righteousness (i.e., justice) of God that is revealed, manifested, and displayed (cf Rom.1:17; 3:21,25) in the evangel of God, which is the evangel of the grace of God (Rom.1:1,16,17; 3:19-24).

Again, it is not at all that God’s justice is somehow “disguised” as grace, but rather that God’s genuine grace (as realized in the evangel of Christ), reveals, manifests, and displays God’s genuine justice (i.e., righteousness) to us. This is to say that divine grace informs us as to the dictates of divine justice—both in its response and as to its decree—in consideration of human sin and sinfulness.

The situation among men is most grave: “all are under sin, according as it is written, that ‘Not one is just’—not even one. Not one is understanding. Not one is seeking out God. ‘All avoid Him: at the same time they were useless. Not one is doing kindness: there is not even one!’ ‘A sepulcher opened is their throat. With their tongues they defraud.’ ‘The venom of asps is under their lips.’ Whose mouth with imprecation and bitterness is crammed. Sharp are their feet to shed blood. ‘Bruises and wretchedness are in their ways, and the way of peace they do not know.’ There is no fear of God in front of their eyes” (Rom.3:9b-18).

Yet, astonishingly, God’s response to mankind’s terrible plight, is a message which can only be characterized as one of glad tidings indeed.

By way of prelude to the evangel itself we would note: The scripture having locked up all together under sin (cf Gal.3:22) “that every mouth may be barred, and the entire world . . . become subject to the just verdict of God” (Rom. 3:19), the Judge of all the earth will now execute His judgment (cf Gen.18:25) and announce His decree, which are as follows, and are the evangel of God:

Since, among men, “there is no distinction” as to who has sinned and who has not—“for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God” (Rom.3:22,23)—the God of all grace righteously declares “a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ’s faith” (Rom.3:22a). This declaration of the evangel, which is “for all, and on all who are believing” (Rom.3:22a), is the glorious blessing of “Being justified gratuitously in [God’s] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom.3:24). This evangel is the righteous adjudgment and decree that, through the work of Christ and as the achievement of God, all mankind—of whom none are righteous—nevertheless, in due course, will all be made righteous. This is the evangel!

UNSEEMLY CARICATURES OF TRUTH

Even though we cannot control what others wrongly infer or misconstrue from our words, our own usage of such terms as “deserve” (or “worthy”) and “blame” are nevertheless consistent with our findings as to God’s deity, as is our general understanding of this deep and profound subject.
You stated, “I am still surprised that Concordant continues to pass off grace as absolutely a disconnected state of mindless love with God,” to which my reply here is as follows: Even if it should be gratifying to do so, I would suggest that it is just not helpful to make disparaging comments, to give others of whom we are critical “a piece of our mind,” or the like. Our goal is not to “tell off” one another, but to help one another.

Insinuative expressions such as “pass off,” speak of practical if not intentional acts which mislead. We certainly do not represent (either explicitly or effectively) grace as being (much less of grace as absolutely being) something that is disconnected from what God does, or otherwise as a disconnected state of love—much less of a disconnected state of mindless love. It is just that we do not make our own ethical “feelings” and suppositions the basis of what God must do, if He would retain His own righteousness.

Indeed, my sheerly “personal” (which is to say, pre-sufficiently-reflective) ethics accord with your own in the notion that God, indeed, “ought to” save and deliver us (i.e., that in this respect we are “worthy” of salvation), since it is God Himself Who put us in the very position in which we now find ourselves, that of being desperately in need of salvation. It is not that I “disagree” with this; it is just that, even in light of the above considerations, I still would not make what I, “in myself,” suppose that God “should do,” effectively the basis of what God should do. This is because, hitherto, I may have failed to note some important consideration here. And, it is especially because it is just not my place to inform God as to what He should do.

It would not be reflective of wisdom for me to presume that I already know what Righteousness will do, prior to God informing me of the same. Hence it is not proper for anyone to assert—certainly in any way that speaks of what

Vital Distinctives of Grace

is innately one’s own—any declaration as to what it is that Righteousness must do.

My definition of “grace” is not at all that of the common view thereof, which is that grace is “... a benefit bestowed on one who deserves the opposite.” Hence, I do not wish to defend the definition of grace along these lines given in the Keyword Concordance (p.132). Even so, it is only if one takes the word “deserves” in the full-throated, common freewill-responsibility-entailing sense (which is not this word’s only accepted usage), that an opponent would thus be afforded any grounds for criticism.

It is true that, the popular understanding of terms being what it is, I wish the Keyword Concordance had provided, instead of what it does provide, such a definition of grace as I propose below. Even so, I do not want to make overmuch of what is almost certainly a mere oversight.

I realize that it is I myself who brings up this matter concerning this deficiency of our own publication, and that you have not herein criticized us, as such. But even so, your idea does seem to be that we do, somehow—in our wider, actual teaching—in any case, at least effectively concur in such a common wrongheaded view of grace. This, however, is just not so.

In our view, grace is: An act producing happiness, which is granted as a favor (Rom.11:6), which is simply to say, granted not out of works, as a reward (Rom.4:4), but as an act of simple beneficence, inspired by love. However expressed, I have continually affirmed, explicated, and defended this definition of grace, even as the related yet discrete proposition that God’s grace is granted gratuitously, in a way that is uncalled for, in view of any supposed right deed of our own, which has obliged God thus to act.

Human opinions of any sort either as to what we are “worthy” of, or as to what our “just deserts” ought to be, are just that: human opinions. They are largely intuition-
driven, and can only be “proved” correct through circular reasoning; further, in my experience, they are invariably confounded by some combination of false ideas about human freedom, and/or are reflective either of pridefulness, mean-spiritedness and anger, or both.

RIGHTeousness AND Grace

The common argument that there is “no reason” for God to extend grace because humanity is so very unworthy, conceives of a merit-based grace, in which “grace” is coming to be no longer grace (cf Rom.11:6).

“Reason” (i.e., motivation) for action is hardly confined to reward of merit; it may instead be prompted by love, kindness, pity, righteousness, and, grace.

One cannot disqualify oneself for grace, since grace is not a matter of qualification. Hence, Grace is not hindered by sin, but is rather victorious over it.

In reality, any blessing on the basis of our “own” virtue, would be precluded by our own sinfulness, since any virtue we may have is not only in short supply, but even that virtue is granted us by God. Unless God’s evangel itself should reveal to us that God’s “righteousness” itself will ensure our blessing, we could never know (and could hardly presume) this to be the case, since we have no innate way of finding this out, on our own.

The fact that we are so very sinful (i.e., in this usual sense, so very unworthy), rather than precluding grace, affords the very basis on which grace may be granted, in the case of any such ones as ourselves. This is to say that, if we were not to be blessed on a basis of righteous grace, there would be no other basis on which we could be blessed.

We certainly could not presume that we would somehow still be blessed anyway, on the basis of God’s righteousness instead of His grace, on the dubious assumption that even in the absence of Grace, Righteousness would still prevail

but Righteousness Revealed in Grace (as if the former excludes the latter, and, the latter, the former). This is because we are not the arbiters of righteousness; instead, God is the arbiter of righteousness.

My perspective here is simply because I wish to avoid making my own views of “justice” (whatever any such views of mine may be) the basis of what is actually just. All of God’s ways and deeds are righteous, if not in isolation (indeed, no deed of anyone, thus, is either right or wrong), then in the only way possible, which is immanent and telically, which is to say, in what He designs, intends, and achieves (cf e.g., Gen.50:20; James 5:11; Job 1:21; 42:11; Rom.8:28). Hence, since I do not see any of God’s deeds as “wrong,” I therefore would not speak disapprovingly of them.

This is why I decline to use any sort of coarse and negative (either explicitly or connotatively negative) language in reference to any of God’s acts, for example, any such words as your expressions “subterfuge,” “taking off,” “trapped,” “cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us,” “master of deception,” or any other of the many such expressions and idioms which you employ.

You say, “God had to hide behind grace because He knew humans would not understand. Maybe that includes Concordant.” To the contrary, I would suggest that God has no need to conceal His righteousness “behind grace.” This is because it is in His righteousness that He acts in grace. In our salvation, God not only acts in righteousness; He also acts in grace. It is not at all, then, that He would be obliged, even somehow on our behalf, to misrepresent Himself as acting in grace—as if it were the case that, in salvation, God acts only in justice, and, not also in grace.

One can only come to the conclusion that, in salvation, God must cloak His righteousness in a spurious garment of grace—especially in any conclusion that posits its own findings against our own—by opposing what is an admix-
tute of that which is our teaching with that which is not our teaching.

You also say, “I understand that Concordant cannot teach this in its graphic form because it makes Paul a little wilted and it provokes outrage to consider God cooking up a conspiracy of evil against us.”

We have not lacked for people becoming provoked at us for our teaching, even if we have sought not to provoke them. We do not present our ideas in street language, due to its frequent shortcomings of imprecision, inadequacy, unseemliness, misleadingness, and, unworthiness. Yet since it is in this selfsame manner, nevertheless, in which most people see fit to speak, and insist on speaking (even as by means of which to engage their minds in thought), our critics have not hesitated to characterize our views of God’s deity as amounting to His having “cooked up a conspiracy of evil against us,” and the like. (I am mindful that you use such an expression, at least in a way, affirmatively, unlike our usual critics in their own denunciatory use of such verbiage, and that, rather, this is how you see things and wish to express yourself, hereby affirming simply what you perceive as true, not, as such, in any particular reference to our own teachings.)

I would not (and do not) hesitate to say that God, righteously, and in love, has given us the experience of evil which we undergo (which includes our own sinfulness and sinful deeds, even as their consequences), and that He has done so in order to humble us by it (Ecc.1:13; cp John 3:27), as well as, more generally, that He has done so in order to achieve good and glorious ends otherwise unattainable. But this present evil which we undergo is only temporarily “against” us, even as mortality and death themselves—both of which God gives us, quite apart from our deeds—which, while certainly “against” us, are only temporarily so, not permanently. Ultimately, this God-
analogy concerning the scene in the garden of Eden. And, Romans 8:20 speaks to me as well. I expect, just as strongly as it does to you. I certainly agree with you concerning the common failure to affirm God’s ultimate (be it ever so remote) responsibility for human sin. I likewise agree with you, then, that it is incorrect to say that it is we ourselves alone who are ultimately responsible for our sins, and that, therefore, we are not fit and worthy objects of Christ’s death on our behalf—that thus we were “not worth” dying for.

We have to be careful with the words “worth” and “worthy,” however, which while they are sometimes used in reference to “value” (I quite agree that we are “valuable,” altogether precious in God’s sight), yet in other cases have in view the notion of “desert” or “worthiness,” concerning which idea, as I explain above, we must not make our “native” notions concerning justice, the basis of what God must do if He would be righteous, and act righteously.

In any event, there simply can be no reason for anyone to think or speak in any way negatively of God and His ways, whether we are speaking formally or informally. While I am not one to avoid being “graphic” on every occasion, even so, I do not seek to speak frequently, much less constantly in such a manner—as some sort of “sensationalist” or provocateur. One may be explicitly clear, while avoiding completely being either crude and simplistic, or—which is far worse—critical and negative in any respect in relation to God and His ways, while at all times remaining reverent and worshipful of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Most people are wont to use the word “just” here, as opposed to its synonym, “righteous,” since, common idiom being what it is, in the hearing of most, they can indeed more effectively, emotionally cash out their idea of what is proper and fair by means of the term “just,” than by the word “righteous.”
THE LAW AND JUSTIFICATION

The Law of Moses is given a place in modern Christianity quite foreign to God’s purpose. Even true believers do not seem to understand its function, hence we will point out briefly what use God makes of it under the old and new covenants with the Circumcision, and why it is out of place today, especially in the evangel of the Uncircumcision. Originally God gave no code of conduct. Not until the sons of Israel were delivered from Egypt did He hand down instructions for their behavior along with penalties for disobedience. Moreover, He never gave the law to the great mass of mankind. Only a minute minority have been put under it. This should show that the idea that His dealings with all men is merely a question of obedience or disobedience to His commands, is far from truth and fact.

As the law is not of faith, but of works, it is only a limited, local and national demonstration, for one nation and one land and one religion, not for all men in every land and every nation. The evangel of the Circumcision retains it; that of the Uncircumcision acknowledges the lesson it has to teach, but never seeks to repeat the demonstration. The law was not given until Israel came to Sinai. Even they did not have it before. It was never given to the nations. They will not even have it in the millennium. Not even Israel can fulfill it in their dispersion. They must be in the land. If they had fulfilled it, they would never have had to leave the land. It cannot be kept anywhere else, or by any other nation. How absurd it is for Christianity to leave faith, which is for them, and purloin the law, which is not
their! They alter it from a national to an individual matter, from local to a world-wide scope, from a small minority to the great mass, from a demonstration of the frailty of the flesh to an attempt to prove the opposite.

MUTILATING THE LAW

In order to give this even a semblance of sanity, they are forced to mutilate the law or repudiate many of its precepts. Now there is no temple and no priesthood, so they invent many false and feeble imitations. They cannot go to the holy city several times a year, so they worship every Sunday instead of resting on the Sabbath. They divide the law into the “moral” and the “ceremonial” law in order to reject the latter, notwithstanding the dire penalties which would follow if Yahweh took them seriously. Faith makes free, but even a pretense of observing the law has brought Christendom into bondage and condemnation. Notwithstanding that they fail to do multitudes of things written in the law, which should condemn them, some find no rest, merely because a few points, such as Sabbath keeping, are deemed vital. They do not realize that the law is broken by a single failure of even a trivial matter. It is not necessary to be a flagrant criminal to bring down its curse. All who seek to keep it, break it.

One of the sad results of the illogical, hypocritical and unscriptural handling of the law in Christendom is an attitude of credulity and confusion toward the Word of God. Our daily experience does not correspond with what is written in the law. We may not see clearly that God is evidently dealing on an entirely different principle, but it is apparent that the good do not prosper and the bad do not suffer, as the law would lead us to expect. Quite the reverse is often the case. In almost every relationship in life the law of Moses is a misfit. Not only can it not be kept, but it will not operate. Some of its provisions clash with the laws of other nations, to which God’s saints must be subject (cf Rom.13:1).

One example of the ease with which even the saints are led astray because of a false apprehension of the function of the law, and of a failure to see that it is not of faith and contrary to the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus, is found in the attempt to prove that some of the modern nations are the lost ten tribes, who have risen to world dominance while absent from the land while failing to fulfill the law, and while uncircumcised. Uncircumcision alone would cut them off from Yahweh’s people (Gen.17:14). See what the Jews suffer, many of whom make an earnest attempt to conform to the law! These nations should not fare so well, while breaking His covenant as well as His law. It should call down the thunders and lightnings of Sinai. If our country is indeed Israel, and prospers in spite of God’s threats, we are facing a more terrible doom in the day of God’s indignation than any other. To be Israel, under law, does not bring blessing, but condemnation and death.

CONDITIONS IN JOB’S DAY

The underlying purpose of God in dealing with mankind is brought before us in the book of Job, who lived before the law was given. According to popular notions prevailing in religious circles today, Job should never have suffered, for he was a just man and feared God. The evil that came upon him was not for any ill that he had done, or as punishment for any crimes that he had committed. He did not break any law and suffer its just penalty. God did not deal with him on the ground of law or of retribution at all. Even when sorely tempted to curse God, he did not yield to it. Nevertheless his trial continued until we are almost tempted to join his false friends and insist that he must be getting his just deserts, for God must not be accused of treating him unjustly.
We do not consider the end that the Lord has in view. We imagine all evil must be related to something bad in the past instead of something good in the future. We do not realize that evil is a gift from God, designed to bring us down to our proper place and raise God up to the position His deity demands in the glorious consummation, when He will be All in all. We need evil for what we are, and shall be, not merely for any wrong that we have done. Evil is not essentially a penalty, but a preparation. It is humbling and revealing and necessary for the appreciation of good and of God.

LAW OR GRACE?

The appalling pride and conceit and blindness of Christendom is evident from their attitude toward God’s law. Though it was not given to them, and it is practically impossible for them to fulfill it, because of their position and physical descent, they insist on attempting what Israel utterly failed to accomplish and which has cost them unutterable suffering and woe. Believers who take up this intolerable burden are even more accountable, because, in doing so, they reject the grace for which the law should prepare them. Why keep on repeating a needless and painful, though imperfect demonstration, which will only confirm their need of the grace which God offers them so freely?

FALSE CONCEPTIONS

In most Christian lands there is a fundamentally false conception of the place of the law of Moses in God’s dealing with mankind. This is especially the case where religion is under the patronage of the state, and is taught in the schools. Apart from the ritual, nearly all conduct is based on the ten commandments. People are told: Keep these, and God will reward you in this life, as well as in that which is to come. One might think that their fail-

1. “For what was impossible to the law . . . did God . . . that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit” (Rom. 8:3, 4). 

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4. “For what was impossible to the law . . . did God . . . that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit” (Rom. 8:3, 4). 

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6. “For what was impossible to the law . . . did God . . . that the just requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with spirit” (Rom. 8:3, 4). 

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youth. It had been suggested that this is a good preparation for the grace of God, for the law would show them all that they were unable to keep it, and thus prepare them for the evangel. But man's innate self-righteousness only hardens under the impact of law.

Possibly the thunders of Sinai may open some hearts to God's grace, but it did not do so among these people. We know that it failed to do so even in Israel as a nation, although the law was adapted to them. If it is God's means of preparing for His grace, we should expect that He would have given it to all the people on earth instead of only to a very small minority. Today the very nation that has the law and takes it most seriously is most opposed to the evangel of grace, although a few of them are being reached by it. On the other hand, many have been and are being blessedly saved, who know little or nothing of the law of Moses. Practice seems to prove that it is not intended as a preparation for the evangel. It hinders and hardens, rather than helps and humbles the sinner in his approach to God.

Just as the truth of justification skips over the Acts of the apostles and the ministry of our Lord as well as the prophets and kings and judges of Israel, going back to Abram before his circumcision, so the relation of the saints today to the law goes back to the time when there was no law, when God dealt with the nations apart from Israel. Since then the nations have not been given the law, and the saints among them are not joined to the apostate nation in this regard, much as the Jews would have wished to have it so. They did not understand God's purpose in the law. They imagined, as most of Christendom does today, that God gave it for them to keep instead of for their condemnation.

**LAW ENTERED BY THE WAY**

Law is not the foundation of God's dealings with the race. It only came in by the way (Rom.5:20). Its object was not to give men a standard of conduct by which they may walk to please God, but to transform sin into offense. It is only a temporary expedient in God's great demonstration, showing that man not only falls short of the glory of God, but is at enmity with Him. He not only fails, but rebels. The light of the law does not keep him from sin, but leads him on to offense.

The Circumcision evangel provides power to fulfill the law, but in the evangel of the Uncircumcision God's righteousness is manifested apart from the law (Rom.3:21). The early chapters of Romans review and restate the whole question of man's relation to God in order to clear the ground for a new foundation on which to rest a fresh revelation, quite distinct and different from the Circumcision evangel. It is not confined to the Circumcision and proselytes, but includes all mankind. It is not limited to the land. It does not appeal to God's written revelation, but to the light of nature and conscience, which takes the place of law among the nations.

In the comingon the law that was engraven in stone will be written on the hearts of God's earthly people (Heb. 8:8-12). Strange as it may seem, the nations, who have no such law, already have a measure of it in their hearts. They do by nature what the law demands, and display the action of a law they never formally received. Their conscience, which usually leads them to accuse others and defend themselves, enforces it because they are likewise guilty. In this way they are a law to themselves (Rom.2:3,14-16). This takes the place of the law of Moses, and is sufficient for the purpose. It is contrary to God's will and out of line with His plan to place the nations under the Mosaic legislation, and in many ways is entirely impracticable for either believers or unbelievers. If the whole world were put under the law, it would defeat the object of the law, which is to emphasize the infirmity of the flesh even...
under the most advantageous circumstances. This can be shown only when those under it are specially favored.

TWO LAWS

Actually, there are two laws, one natural and universal, the other revealed and for a special people. Both operate to condemn and convict of shortcoming and sin. The law of Moses goes further, because God is disobeyed and defied when His instructions are not heeded. It changes a sin, or mistake, into a transgression, and a shortcoming into a personal offense. But, if the obtuse hearts of its hearers are conceited and callous enough to imagine that they can and do fulfill it (which, alas, is too often the case), it is no more effective as a preparation for the evangel than the law of nature among the nations. Indeed, Paul labors as long in the early chapters of Romans to bring those under law down to the level where they will accept God’s righteousness (2:17-3:20) as was necessary in the case of the nations.

One striking difference between these two laws is brought out in the discussion in Romans. The law of Moses has its rewards and penalties in the present life, but all mankind looks forward to a future day when God’s judgment will set right all the wrong that has accumulated. Both Jews and Greeks, those under revealed law and those under natural law, none will be excused, for neither law brings those under it to God’s ultimate. No law succeeds in restoring the proper relationship between man and God, which is the object of judgment.

In the evangel of the Uncircumcision, God is not demonstrating man’s failure and the futility of his efforts to do His will by any such means as the law, that is, by works. That experiment is finished, so far as we are concerned, and we are asked to accept the conclusion by faith. The first few chapters of Paul’s epistle to the Romans discuss this matter fully. It is not limited to a chosen people, one nation in one land, with special advantages, as in the Circumcision evangel, but deals with the whole race, every nation everywhere, including those under law. It considers the conduct of all, with or without divine illumination. In all it appeals to the light of conscience and nature, which leads men to judge their fellows. This leads to a revelation of God’s judgment. If man judges his fellow, how much rather shall God do! And a knowledge of the law will only make men’s sins offensive.

APARENT CONTRADICTIONS

Many apparent contradictions in the Scriptures come from lifting a thought out of its context. Thus we read that the doers of the law will be justified (Rom.2:13). Yet a little later this seems to be flatly denied when the apostle comes to the conclusion that by works of law no flesh shall be justified (Rom.3:20). Both passages apply to the same people, those under law, but they view the theme from entirely different angles. One statement is in the elementary realm of truth, the other in the practical realm of action. One is the basis of Paul’s argument, the other is the conclusion. This does not deny the premise. We cannot say that the doers of the law will not be justified. The evidence introduced between these two statements makes it clear that no one fulfills the conditions, hence, though the truth remains, that justification is possible to law keepers, the fact is that the flesh in mankind finds it impossible to obey the law and reach justification by this means.

There is another apparent contradiction in connection with the nations who are not under the law, that has been used to utterly distort the evangel of God’s grace. What can be stronger than, “to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness?” Nevertheless there are many who cannot receive this because “God...will be paying each one
Faith furnishes Life

that the old-fashioned schoolmaster was sometimes more proficient with the rod than with the reader. In this he resembled the Greek paidagōgos, whose name he inherited. But the Greek slave used his means of physical persuasion to lead his charges to school, not to teach them in school. It is the discipline of the law which drives those under it to the Saviour, just as Israel’s failures and consequent distress which made them call on Yahweh of old. Had they learned and kept the law, they would not have needed a saviour.

Strikingly different is the relation of the believer to the law today from that of the Circumcision. Their evangel is contained in the new covenant. Yahweh will not loose them from the law. Rather He will impart His laws to their comprehension and inscribe them on their hearts (Jer.31:33; Ezek.36:26,27). They will be given an inward impulse and a divine power to carry out God’s precepts during the thousand years. They will fulfill it in the strength which He provides. It will no longer be a ministration of death.

WE DIED TO THE LAW

The very opposite is our portion, as well as of those of the Jews who, like Paul, received the evangel of the Uncircumcision. To them it does deal out death. They are caused to die to the law through the body of Christ. They are exempted from the law. They serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the letter (Rom.7:7-16). Not the literal precepts, but the just requirements of the law are fulfilled in those who do not walk in accord with flesh, but in harmony with spirit (Rom.8:1-4).

What a relief for those who have earnestly striven to obey a part of the law, to be rid of its bondage! Very few realize that, if they are under law, they are under a curse. And this is true of them even if they succeed in fulfilling ninety-nine per cent of its injunctions. Only Christ can

THE LAW AN ESCORT

For a long time I was misled by the AV translation, “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ” (Gal.3:24). This gives the impression that the law is to teach us the way to Christ, and that we must learn its precepts in order to find the way. If this is so, it is a substitute for the evangel, and men could be educated into Christ. But there is not the slightest warrant in the Greek for the rendering “schoolmaster.” The only connection may lie in the fact

according to his acts, to those, indeed, who by endurance in good acts are seeking glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life…” (Rom.2:6). They are both in Romans, and destroy one another if we do not leave them in their own context. The earlier one states the truth underlying God’s judgment, but it is never realized because no one fulfills the conditions. This is why men are shut up to justification by faith. Their deeds never deserve the reward which God holds out.

This preview of God’s judgment comes just before the statement which we have already considered. It is a parallel to “the doers of the law will be justified,” for it has the same place in Paul’s argument. Here we have endurance in good acts, and payment therefore, in place of law keeping and its reward. Just as there is no one able to claim justification on the ground of obedience to the law, so with those who are not under law. All fall short of the standard here set. Just as we cannot deny that the doers of the law will be justified, so we cannot say that those who endure in good acts will not be justified. That would be a contradiction. The further context, however, shows clearly that “not one is just” (Rom.3:10). So the conclusion that follows is not a contradiction, but a confirmation. Justification on the ground of acts is impossible in practice, hence God justifies on the ground of faith.
claim those under this curse. This He will do when He comes to the Circumcision. But those of the nations, who have no law, should never have placed themselves under it.

Justification can never come through law-keeping. It came to Abraham long before the law was given. It comes to us who never received it. It comes to those under it only by means of death to it. Yet its righteous requirements are fulfilled by those who, having God’s righteousness, not their own, are led by His spirit. Let us praise and glorify our God Who finds in Himself and in His Christ all that is needed to make us just, so that He can reconcile us to Himself and glorify us in His Beloved Son!

A. E. Knoch

THE LAW IN ROMANS

When the truth for today is presented to us by Paul in Romans, it is not based on law, but on the failure of law. The great point here is that we have come to an end of the law. God has demonstrated that there is nothing in the law by which to attain salvation or blessing. That is not so with the Circumcision. God still keeps on in the kingdom even with the law in order to make His demonstration complete. God limited His law to only a small people. Later on He actually writes the law upon the hearts of His people, and even that does not bring in perfection. When we come to the end of the dispensation of law and to the time when Paul begins to write, we have a divine righteousness entirely apart from law.

God does not reckon on anyone justifying himself. In the fifth of Romans we read: “Consequently, then, as it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation . . . .” Thank God there are no exceptions! It would nullify the work of Christ if a single soul should be able to work its way into salvation or justification or anything of that kind, either through law or apart from law. That which was impossible to the law, in which it was infirm through the flesh, did God, in the sending of His own Son (Rom.8:4).

In his walk, the believer has the blazing brightness of God’s greatest grace both as luminary and as a vital power to enable him to live far above the monitions of conscience or the thunders of the law.

A. E. Knoch
WHAT, THEN, SHALL WE BE DECLARING?

The grace of God in giving His Son for sinners together with its effects of righteousness and peace superecedes over the ever increasing accumulation of the sin of Adam so that it may be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord (Rom.5:20,21).

This is not an easy passage to understand, especially where our minds are occupied with ourselves and what we do rather than what has been done by God, and when our concept of the grace of God is mixed up with works of law. Paul knew this, and so, in Romans 6:1, he offers a wrongheaded wording of what he has just written, which he immediately dismisses in no uncertain terms.

In light of the evangel just presented, Paul asks: What, then, shall we be declaring? Shall we be declaring that we may be persisting in sin that grace should be increasing?

May it not be coming to that!

The declaration of Romans 6:1 may seem to follow the general pattern of thought of 5:20. But on further examination in light of the whole context, we see it is not a faithful re-wording of the declaration that where [the] sin increases [the] grace superecedes. And it is not at all in harmony with the exultant declaration of Romans 5:21 that “even as Sin reigns in death, thus [the] Grace should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

Romans 5:20,21 is not a declaration of what we may do in order to serve God and the cause of grace. It is a dec-
The Grace is What Christ Did and the Effects of What He Did

God puts the righteousness, which He has gained for us through the faith of Jesus Christ, to our account when we are believing this evangel. It is out of Christ’s faith, for our faith. This is also a matter of grace, for it does not rest on our works.

Therefore, we stand in grace (Rom.5:2). We stand in this particular grace that we are justified before God by means of the faith of Jesus Christ. But also, being justified out of Christ’s faith, in God’s grace, we who are believing this evangel, may be enjoying peace toward God even now. For, even though we are enemies in ourselves, we were conciliated to God, not by our endeavors to make peace with Him, but through the death of God’s Son And that alone!

To speak of justification, righteousness reckoned to us who are believing and the obtaining of the conciliation is to speak of God’s grace, apart from works of law. These favors are outworkings of the one favor of God’s giving of His Son, Who died for our sakes. Grace is what was done, and then grace is what results from what was done.

THE GRACE

We note this especially in Romans 5:15-21 where the words “the grace” refer to that one act of Jesus Christ which is contrasted to Adam’s one act of sinning, and also to the results of this astounding act of our Lord.

Not as the offense, thus also the grace. For if, by the offense of the one, the many died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds. (Rom.5:15)

And not as through one act of sinning is the gratuity. For, indeed, the judgment is out of one into condemnation, yet the grace is out of many offenses into a just award. (Rom.5:16)

For if, by the offense of the one, death reigns through
the one, much rather, those obtaining the superabundance of [the] grace and the gratuity of righteousness shall be reigning in life through the One, Jesus Christ. (Rom.5:17)

Where [the] sin increases, [the] grace supereceeds, that, even as [the] Sin reigns in death, thus [the] Grace also should be reigning through righteousness for life eternian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. (Rom.5:20,21)

In these verses we see that “the grace” stands in contrast to Adam’s act and its effects. The grace is contrasted to “the offense,” (verses 15 and 17), to “the one act of sinning” (verse 16), and to “the sin” (verses 20 and 21). As to its effects, the grace is contrasted to the entrance of sin and death into the world, to the reign of death in the lives of Adam’s descendants, to the judgment of sinners which leads to condemnation, and to the horrible, snow-balling increase of the one little sin of Adam. What Christ did superabounds in its character and its effects over what Adam did.

“Not as the offense, thus also the grace.” The offense was a relatively minor act of soulish disobedience which came about without a struggle, yet which brought dishonor to God, Who created humanity in His image and likeness. The grace was an act of superhuman pain and sacrifice in obedience and sellessness for the good of others and to the glory of God. Besides giving offense to God, the offense introduced death and sin into the world which tyrannize over the race. But the grace brings about the manifestation of the righteousness of God; for the sinner it establishes justification, peace and life of the highest value, supereceeding in the intensity, permanence and potency of these effects over sin and enmity and death.

As an act, the grace is the death, entombment and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and as the outcome of this act, the grace is justification, conciliation and the enjoyment of the glory of God. This operation of grace, declared in

the evangel of God characterizes the present era in which we live and grants spiritual power day by day to those who are believing it message.

**GRACE AND HUMAN BOASTING**

When the law was presented to Israel, the people declared: “All that Yahweh speaks we shall do” (Exodus 19:8). When the evangel of the grace of God is presented, the common reaction is: “Yes, but we still have to do such and such.”

In one way or another, we want to be able to say we are ready to do something that qualifies as our contribution to God’s grace. We may speak in terms of grace but still think in terms of law. It may be that we do not fully trust the grace of God and the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ. This is surely offensive to God, but it does not change the fact that we are justified and con-ciliated to Him in grace.

The evangel as a message of God’s gratuitous giving and achievement has been declared, and this declaration ends in a period, not a comma followed by the conjunction, “but,” and selected good works for us to do.

The declaration of grace is the evangel we are believing, and this is what prepares us for Romans 6. The basis and power for walking in newness of life is not law or any system of obligations, and it is not human resolve to keep such obligations, but it is the grace, the fact that Christ died, and this was for the good of humanity. We hear of this grace in the declaration that while we are still sinners, Christ died for our sakes, and we are affected by this grace as we are believing it. We enter into Romans 6 by way of Romans 3:21-5:21, and most immediately by the revelation of the supereexceeding vitality and glory of God’s grace over every increase of sin, and the certainty of its reign over human lives. We stand in grace, and our walk is directed by grace.
In God’s grace, this reign of His grace in justifying and conciliating us by means of the death of Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the fact He was roused from among the dead, has already begun to operate in the lives of us who are believing this evangel of grace. Ultimately, it will reign over all. But for us the reign of grace has begun ahead of time in connection with the earnest of the spirit.

GRACE SUPEREXCEEDS

To say that the grace which results in justification and God’s reckoning of righteousness to the believer, and His gratuitous gift of conciliation, supercedes over every increase of sin and shall reign over human lives is to testify to the greatness and power of God’s grace channeled through His Son. The verb form states a fact. The grace superceeds. Our attention is on the grace and what it does for us and to us who are sinners. The magnitude of its potency in dealing with sin in its ultimate realization is overwhelming. It is in accord with this magnitude that it exercises power even now over the lives of those who are believing its message.

But to say that we may persist in sin so that grace can increase is to turn the declaration of Romans 5:20 upside down. This draws attention to us and our doing, and this is to say that what we do makes grace what it is. This puts what we do in the driver’s seat. If we cannot pay for grace, at least we can make it bigger.

May it not be coming to that?

The grace spoken of in Romans 5:20,21 is God’s giving of His Son for sinners, and this has been carried out. And it is God’s justifying of the sinner and conciliating of the enemy on the basis of Christ’s death, and this is settled and sure. This grace is so superabundantly great that it superceeds in power and victory and effect over all our many offenses (cf Rom.5:16), past and present and

God is Faithful and Righteous

future. We believe this even though we do not see it or feel it, and it is in our believing of it that it exerts power even now in our lives.

We do not make the superceeding grace of God increase. Our Lord Jesus Christ has made it what it is by His faith and obedience. “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, being rich, because of you He became poor, that you, by His poverty, should be rich” (2 Cor.8:9). It is superabundant, and it ever superceeds every increase made to the sin of Adam. The manifestation of God’s grace to us and our recognition and appreciation of the immensity of its glory and power, do increase. But the immensity of the glory and power of His grace itself cannot be made greater than it is.

The declaration of Romans 6:1 misreads the declaration of 5:20 and completely ignores what is said in 5:21. The grace superceeds over every increase of sin so that it should be reigning through righteousness, reigning through that righteousness of God in justifying sinners which comes through the faith of Jesus Christ. What Adam did exercises control over our lives by means of the dying process which has passed through from Adam into the flesh of all his descendants (Rom.5:12). Thus Sin reigns in this condition of death first spoken of in Scripture by the words “to die shall you be dying” (Gen.2:17). But this reign is on its way out, and a new reign is coming in, at present in spirit as an earnest of what is to be. This is the reign of The Grace, the reign of God’s love commended in the fact that Christ died for sinners, the reign of God’s immense favor to us who are sinners at enmity toward Him.

THE RIGHT DECLARATION

Where the sin increases the grace superceeds so that it shall reign in human lives. Once again we ask, What does this mean to us? What shall we say about it?
There is Power in Truth

We declare that God’s grace in the giving of His Son to the death of the cross for justification and peace and life is greater in effect and power over humanity than the sin of Adam. Furthermore, we declare that this grace will ultimately reign in the lives of every human being. Indeed, as we are believing this evangel of grace, its reign has already begun in our hearts.

How so?

The power is in the message of truth, and it is activated in the believing of that message. It is then experienced as a matter of continuing salvation in the retaining of that message (cf 1 Cor.15:1,2).

The Israelite was to repeat the law over and over again, soliloquizing on its every word (cf Psa.1:2). The Greek word used in the Septuagint Version for the Hebrew word rendered “soliloquizing” is employed by Paul in his first letter to Timothy, where it is translated “meditate.” “Faithful is the saying and worthy of all welcome . . . that we rely on the living God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers. These things be charging and teaching . . . . Till I come, give heed to reading, to entreaty, to teaching . . . . On these things meditate” (1 Tim.4:9-15).

To soliloquize is to speak to oneself the thoughts revolving in the mind. For us, however, what we say to ourselves in our meditations is not the word of the law, but rather we are letting the word of Christ be making its home in us richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing ourselves; in psalms, in hymns, in spiritual songs, singing, with grace in our hearts to God (Col.3:16).

Because of the flesh, the law was not able to grant power for the keeping of its instructions. But the word of Christ is a message making known the grace which supercedes the increase of sin. It is the word which says that in grace, through faith, are we saved, and this is not out of us; it is God’s approach present, not of works, lest anyone should

With Grace in our Hearts

be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them (Eph.2: 8-10). As this word makes its home in us in our believing of it, it becomes power for salvation.

THE GRACE OF DEATH WITH CHRIST

The grace of God is based upon the death of Christ, and this involves the death of humanity as it exists, a race of billions of sinners descended from Adam and including him. The words of 2 Corinthians 5:14 are plain words, as surprising and strange as they may seem to be.

For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died.

This is called the love of Christ. But it is also the grace of Christ which expresses the grace of God as it does the love of God (cf Rom.5:8). This constrains us. It has a powerful influence on us as we are believing it. None of us endured what Christ endured in dying on the cross. None of us felt the pain and experienced the horror of the forsakemness which Christ experienced. But His death meant our death. The old humanity continues, but it is doomed. It has received the sentence of death which will be carried out so that all will be vivified in Christ and live as He is living, that is, living to God (1 Cor.15:22; Rom.6:11).

But that looks to the future, and Paul is telling us in Romans 6 what all this means right now to us who are believing. We are those who are referred to in 2 Corinthians 5:15 as “those who are living,” who “should by no means still be living to themselves, but to the One dying and being roused for their sakes.”

We are those who, in God’s grace, are believing that Christ died for our sins, that He was entombed and that He has been roused from among the dead. Already in spirit
we are living under the reign of this grace, For we are not
under law, but under grace (Rom.6:14).

WHAT THE EVANGEL IS

Very early in Romans Paul declared, “Not ashamed am
I of the evangel, for it is God’s power for salvation to every-
one who is believing” (Rom.1:16). What he meant by this
is particularly being expounded in Romans 6. Paul is still
evangelizing. He has not left the evangel behind. What he
now says is not a new topic, but rather an expansion and
practical explication of the message of the grace of God and
the gratuity in grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ.

The evangel declares Christ died for all, and in that He
died for all, all died. And in that He died for the believer,
the believer died. And in that He died for me, I died.

Do we get the point? The evangel is that message of grace
which declares that Christ died for our sins, was entombed
and has been roused the third day. But in declaring this it
declares that we died and shall be roused. It declares that
we are baptized into the death of Christ Jesus and were
entombed together with Him that we might be walking
in newness of life. It declares that our old humanity was
 crucified together with Him that the body of Sin may be
nullified, for us by no means to be still slaving for Sin. It
declares that we died together with Christ and that we
shall be living together with Him also.

The solution to the reign of death over us and the reign
of sin in our dying condition begins with our death in the
death of Christ, and it is with this in view that we are
directed to a new way of life, patterned after the life of
Christ, Who, being roused from among the dead, is liv-
ing unto God.

With the declaration of grace, making its home in us
richly, we are ready to direct our hearts to its application
begin in Romans 6:2.     D.H.H.
IN GRACE AND OUT

Grace is a fundamental characteristic of the present administration of the secret (Eph.3:2,9). It is the favor of the previous transitional era continued and intensified and enriched. Superabundant grace (Rom.5:17) had already been manifested in justifying the nations apart from the law or works of any kind, through faith, that it may accord with grace (Rom.4:16). Grace glorious, rich, transcendent, is our portion now (Eph.1:6,7; 2:7). That which the eye did not perceive, and the ear did not hear, and to which the heart of men did not ascend—whatever God makes ready for those who are loving Him—He has revealed to us by His spirit through His latest revelation (1 Cor.2:9,10). And is not this to be expected? So long as God was hindered by human help, His heart was restrained. So long as He was thwarted by creature attainments, His love could not find a free outlet. Grace, undiluted by law, unspoiled by works, unconfined by aught of man, is the fullest, freest outflow of God’s essence, which is love.

But alas! Our tiny cups are far too small to contain it. Our unnatural hearts are too full of self to give God His place as our All. Our pride insists on having some share in the favors He bestows. How desperately the law-laden Jew clings to his own doings! If he cannot justify himself by law keeping, he will at least make it his rule of life after he has been justified. He cannot bear to be bereft of all merit. God must not be All. Man insists on doing his share in creating his future bliss. He must earn, he must deserve the blessings he receives, or lose his self-respect.
Paul found it necessary to devote a whole epistle to the defense of grace. The Galatians had started well, and had received the evangel which he had heralded with its abundant grace. But for Jews, who had been rear ed under the law, this was entirely too much to accept. The fact that God Himself had given the law was enough to convince them that He wished it to be kept. They did not realize that His intention was quite the reverse, that He wished to humble them and teach them their own incompetence and need of Him through its enactments. These Jews did not only try to keep the law themselves, but also sought to fasten it upon those of the nations who believed. Thus they ran counter to the grace which God had made the fundamental feature of the evangel of the Uncircumcision. With stern severity the apostle deals with these Jews because of the seriousness of their error. Even the Galatians are not spared. He tells them plainly that they had fallen out of grace (Gal.5:4).

The Galatian repudiation of God’s grace is more virulent today than ever. Almost all “religious” training, even when definitely evangelistic, is centered in human effort and attainment. Not only is the evangel tainted with Circumcision requirements, such as repentance and baptism, which seem to give the seeker something he can do in order to assist God in securing his salvation, but the saint is loaded with duties which are to help God to finish His work.

But if the superabundant grace of Paul’s evangel is repudiated, what shall we say of the rich, the glorious, the transcendent grace of this secret administration? Is it not possible, nay, probable, indeed, inevitable, that we also have repudiated it, at least to some extent? Alas! how could it be otherwise with mortal men? Christendom has hardly heard of the present grace, and those of us who have, are prone to mix in our own efforts and attainments as though these could procure the gratuities of God. There is a strong current which is corrupting the grace glorious, limiting it to those alone who receive, or understand, or think they perceive the higher truths of Paul’s later epistles. It is always some human attainment which merits this grace, although, in the nature of things, this is impossible, for then grace is no more grace.

THE FUNCTION OF FAITH

It has been suggested that faith is an act of merit on our part which procures justification, and all who do not obey in this way do not deserve it. What a travesty of the truth! Faith has exactly the contrary action. Because it has no merit, it is the only requirement in this economy of purest and fullest favor. Any other condition would clash with it, but faith, having no deserts, is in full harmony with grace (Rom.4:16). Even faith obedience does not consist of acts performed in order to deserve God’s gifts, but is a figure in which the obedience to God’s law is displaced by faith in His Word. Faith is merely the channel through which grace may operate. It cannot act through works or attainments of any kind. These can only nullify its effects.

Justification is for those who believe God. It is not a prize awarded to those who believe it, or accept it, or grasp it. Probably most of the saints have heard little of justification and understood less. Even Luther does not seem to have made a clear cleavage between it and pardon or forgiveness. Shall we conclude, therefore, that Luther and the rest were not justified at all? Shall we shunt them into the kingdom on the earth because they mixed much of the Circumcision evangel into their message? But we are not justified by intelligence or insight, but by faith in God. Abraham was justified, first of all, not because he understood justification, but because He took God at His word concerning his seed. Justification is for all who put what faith they have in God, however feeble it may be. And they
Grace is for All Who are His

few, instead of a gratuitous gift for all who are hallowed by contact with God. If only those who understand the secret or “mystery” are embraced in it, how few will there be in this company! I would not care to be in it, for there would be enough of human pride and boasting to spoil it for one who has learned to distrust himself and look only to God. In it God will not be All. But blessed be God, all who are His now, no matter how ignorant, however wanting in attainments, all will be embraced by the grace glorious, just because it is grace! Let us thank Him at the bottom of our hearts for this marvelous truth!

(IN) to-grace (chariti)

One form of the word grace is particularly rich in its implications, yet it is rather difficult to carry it over into good English in some connections, especially with the verb be. It is simple when the verb will allow the use of the preposition to, as when Paul and Barnabas were given over to the grace of God (Acts 14:26). Webster’s dictionary says that the dative “is generally indicated in modern English by to or for.” Much experiment convinced us that to is the best standard for the sublinear of the CONCORDANT VERSION, and subsequent experience has confirmed this. It is the best uniform rendering. In the version, however, the matter is far more complicated, for each verb has an influence on the following connective. We have tried specially hard to get a good rendering for the parenthesis in Ephesians 2:5.

We cannot say “to grace you are saved,” so we first used Webster’s second choice and rendered it “you have been saved for grace.” This comes close to the sense, yet seems to limit it to the future. In some passages, as Galatians 5:1, for is fine. “For freedom Christ frees us!” And so it seems here, yet, for the sake of uniformity, we have considered adding a word thus: “to (enjoy) grace are you saved.” These
renderings, however, do not fit well in similar passages, so we have adopted a regular rendering for such cases, by inserting the connective in place of to.

The dative case, as shown on the chart, on page 16 of The Greek Elements answers the question Where? and indicates rest in the object named. Hence the characteristic connective is in, which cannot be used for any other case. If we add in, then, for the dative, we are not likely to introduce any false relation. Hence we have thought it well to translate the dative “in grace” in all of those marvelous passages where this has to do with our present position. We, and other translators, have used by, which is, perhaps the most agreeable English. But by is so wide in its usage that it may also denote agency and efficient cause. Its nearest equivalent, in Greek (hypo) is never used with the dative. We seek to restrict this connective to the efficient cause in the CONCORDANT VERSION. This is especially clear in such statements as, “that which is declared by the Lord through the prophet (Matt.1:22). Grace is not the efficient agent (by) or the channel (through), but the sphere in which God operates in this and the preceding administration.

THE SPHERE OF GRACE

Justification is by God as the efficient cause (Rom.8:33), and in Christ (Gal.2:17), and therefore in grace. We are justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). It is not that grace is in the past, and exhausts itself in vindicating us, leaving us to stand in law or works, as the Galatians thought, nor is it merely the channel through which justification came. It is the element, the province in which justification is effected, which remains, not only to maintain our righteousness, but to form a fit field for the further outflow of God’s favor. This is the glorious feature which we seek to unfold in this essay. The dative form of the word grace (our word charity is a close transliteration), is not only bursting with gifts for us, but an apprehension of its nuances will preserve us from the prevailing tendency to make His gratuities attainable by means of human efforts or insight.

In the next passage in Romans where this precious form occurs, we have an example of the expansive force of grace. In comparisons you cannot simply confine it to the limits of the corresponding term. Therefore we read: “But not as the offense, thus also the grace. For if by the offense of the one the many died, much rather the grace of God and the gratuity in grace, which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ, to the many superabounds” (Rom.5:15). The offense brought death. To counteract and restore the damage wrought by Adam would only require that death be nullified by life. But being in Adam and being in Christ are not mere counterparts, one the exact equivalent of the other. We have heard much of this in some philosophies. But these reckon without grace. The gratuity we receive is in grace, and therefore it does not balance the evil, nor does it simply abound. It superabounds. What an intimation there is here of the untold treasures of grace which were still unknown when Paul wrote to the Romans!

Another helpful contrast is given us in the administrative section of Romans. Speaking of the few faithful ones who were left in Israel, Paul compares it with the time in Elijah’s day when God still had seven thousand men left for Himself, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. “Thus, then, in the current era also, there has come to be a remnant according to the choice of grace. Now if it is in grace, it is no longer out of works, else the grace is coming to be no longer grace. Now if it is out of works, it is no longer grace, else the work is no longer work” (Rom.11:6). Note the change from out of works to the dative of grace. Works are the source in one case, but grace is the sphere
In Grace, Rather than

in the other. Israel sought her salvation and worked to attain it, but failed. The chosen, however, in grace, merely encounter it. They find it without seeking or working. God’s favor is unspeakably more efficient and practical than all human exertions.

Even service, in the last analysis, is a question of grace. Grace is the sphere in which it reaches its richest fruition. Paul, in comparing himself with the other apostles, does not appeal to his superior training, his greater faith, or any of his undoubted attainments, but to grace alone. He says: “Yet, in the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace, which is in me, did not come to be for naught, but more exceedingly than all of them toil I—yet not I, but the grace of God which is with me” (1 Cor.15:10). The usual, and, at present, more agreeable formula, “by grace,” is not wrong, yet it does not express the idea as well as “in grace,” which, we hope, will become so precious to those who grasp its significance, that they will soon find it more pleasing to the ear than “by grace.” Service performed in an atmosphere of divine grace is sure to be more fruitful and exceed all that is done by the constraint of law or to attain merit. Grace is the ozone in which our faculties are vivified and leads to labors extensive like itself.

In Paul’s latest and highest revelation a double appeal is made to the fact that salvation through faith (Eph.2:5,8), as heralded in Paul’s evangel, is in grace, hence is the proper atmosphere for the further favors now revealed. The usual rendering is much used to prove that salvation is not of works, and suggests to most minds that the efficient cause of our salvation was grace. This is blessed, of course, yet seems rather incongruous in such an epistle as Ephesians, where it finds no close connection with the context. The point is that the condition of salvation which is theirs through faith, apart from works, is in the sphere of grace, hence they were vivified together with the Cir-

the more Familiar By Grace

cumcision recipients of Paul’s evangel when Christ was vivified. Such a blessing could not come to any mortal on the ground of attainment, and is possible only to those Whom Paul had previously put “in grace.”

This is enlarged upon in one of the most precious passages even in this precious epistle. “For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is God’s approach present, not of works, lest anyone should be boasting. For His achievement are we, being created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them” (Eph.2:8-10). The scene of our salvation is not in ourselves or our deeds, but in God’s favor. He is the One Who is working and even prepares the good works which we may do.

GRACE INVOLVES JOY

Grace, in Greek, comes from the stem joy, for that is its fruit. And so it is that we are exhorted, with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, in grace, to sing in our hearts to God (Col.3:16). Grace can tune our heartstrings as nothing else can. Our vocal cords may not be able to voice the harmony within. Some of us cannot make music on an instrument or in our throats so as to enchant our fellow men. But all of us can make music in our hearts to God. And it will be found that songs which celebrate ourselves, our superiority and attainments, are rare, for these claims are not in grace, and put a damper on our joy.

INVIGORATED IN GRACE

At the very close of Paul’s career he writes to Timothy, “You, then, child of mine, be invigorated by the grace which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim.2:1). That is where real vigor and efficiency and power lies today. The whole tendency of our times is against it. Our youth is trained to be self-confident, self-assured, self-reliant. It is taught to depend on
it's own resources. Body and mind are developed so as to assure success. Power is sought from within. This is only a substitute for God's law and is useful only to prove its own fallacy. The saint should have no confidence in the flesh and expect nothing from it. But we have unbounded confidence in God's grace. The joy of the Lord is our strength. Let us be invigorated, in our weakness, by a practical realization of the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus. We are in grace. Let us make use of it and enjoy it. Timothy was frequently infirm in the flesh. But he was also continually invigorated in grace. May we never fall out!

**Falling out of Grace**

Perhaps the best reason for choosing in to indicate the dative case of grace is the direct contrast which it presents, to Paul's graphic figure, when he described the Galatian apostasy. He said, “You fall out of grace!” (Gal.5:4). They had been in grace, or they could not have fallen out of it. In these days, when there is such a strong tendency to depart from the faith, it will be found that a falling out of grace usually accompanies error. Those who divide the saints into groups according to something in them have fallen out of grace. One who claims to belong to the 144,000 and leaves others in “the great company” proclaims his own merit, denies the one body, and has fallen out of grace. If we claim to belong to a higher and more privileged group in this administration, we destroy its very foundations, for it is based upon the unity of those far and near, the one-ness of those privileged with those who had no covenant or claim on God. It is noteworthy that no one claims to belong to an inferior group. Let us not exalt ourselves at the expense of God's most precious exhibition of grace!

Falling from grace used to be a phrase applied to one whose conduct contradicted his profession. The reformed drunkard was said to fall from grace if he took to his cups again. It was freely used of so-called “backsliders,” and carried with it the loss of salvation. But, of course, all this is entirely foreign to the context where it is found in the Scriptures. The Galatians did not lose their salvation, but their liberty (Gal.5:1-4). They still remained brethren. They had the spirit (Gal.3:2,3). They were disturbed, but not lost. All of us fail in doctrine or deportment. This, however, does not affect that which we have in grace. It was only in their thoughts and practices that the Galatians fell out of grace. Failure in these can only make it abound. In law failure is fatal, but grace is stimulated and multiplied by failure.

**Grace, the Basis of this Administration**

Since grace is the fundamental feature of this administration, which is especially designed to exhibit God's grace to the universe, all doctrine and all deportment may be tested by it. If we have drunk deeply of grace we intuitively shrink from all that involves merit on the part of man. Salvation with the slightest tinge of works, no matter how reasonable or how ably defended, or “proven” in the Bible, finds no response in our spirits. Destiny dependent on human attainment is utterly repugnant to us, for it is a falling out of grace and a repudiation of the very basis of this secret administration. And we will find that our conduct usually agrees with our teaching. Graciousness goes with truth: ungraciousness with error. Not that it is merely sentimental and will not rebuke and expose where this is needed, especially in these last days, but even this will be done in harmony with grace.

Here is where the spiritual saint is safer than the learned scholar. The question of truth may seem difficult in our present ignorance and the strange variety of interpretations which abound, but if God's grace has gripped us, this will be our guiding sun in the midst of the prevailing gloom. It will enable us to steer clear of all the sunken...
God's Grace Needed for All

rocks of human merit that threaten to make shipwreck of our faith. We will refuse to deduce from one set of passages what God plainly denies elsewhere when our reasoning leads us to lean on man instead of God, because this conflicts with the spirit of grace. O that our hearts were established firmly and finally in the freedom of His favor! Much as we value a knowledge of the external facts of God's revelation we have found that these are not acceptable to us in this administration unless our hearts are prepared by an appreciation of God's grace.

The most subtle danger for those who have seen universal reconciliation, is to make it depend in some measure on human merit. This glorious truth may easily degenerate into universalism. There seem to be no doubt that it has done so in the past, and there are indications that it will do so again. Indeed, there are already strenuous efforts being made to show that Romans 3:10-19 is not true. It is implied that every mouth is not to be barred, that some are just, that some are seeking, that all will not be condemned at the great white throne, that God's grace is not needed for good men. How close this comes to salvation by character! Such is said to be the teaching of universalism. It makes my heart bleed to see this trend, and how some who are dear to me are dallying with it. I blame myself for this falling out of grace, for, if I had magnified God's grace as I should, they would never even consider such destructive teaching. Let us repudiate everything that slights His glorious grace, with all our hearts!

A. E. Knoch

EDITOR'S NOTE

The preceding article originally appeared in Unsearchable Riches for May 1940 (vol.31, pages 137-148). Where Brother Knoch used Romans 6:1 to express the character of grace in the section headed THE FUNCTION OF FAITH, this has been changed to Romans 5:20,21. D.H.H.
The Writings, the third and last division of the books in the Hebrew canon has suffered far more than the others by displacement. The various books are scattered throughout the Prophets—chiefly between the Former and Latter Prophets. The first CV fascicle of these writings included the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Job. In this second fascicle the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs appear along with the addition of Ruth, Lamentations and Daniel which have traditionally been placed separately among the Prophets.

The ordinary order of these books in the Hebrew canon is as follows: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles.

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EDITORIAL

We seem to have reached a turning point in the publication of *Unsearchable Riches*. This issue has been long in preparation and is very late in publication. This is partly due to our decision to move the major storage of our literature and its shipping from California to Michigan. Besides involving the transfer of printed literature and mailing equipment, this involves some internal remodeling of an existing building near my home in Michigan, now mostly complete, and the building of a new storage facility (not yet begun). Our fellow worker, Tony Nungesser, will add the work of filling orders and maintenance to that of typesetting, proofreading and assistance to me in almost every phase of my own efforts. Jim and Suella Coram will continue to fulfill the business responsibilities, the processing of orders (which will be transmitted to the Michigan office by computer) and keeping of records. Besides contributing articles for the magazine, Jim will continue to handle and expand the internet phase of our ministry (see the announcement in this issue concerning the availability of the CVOT “on line”).

As for the magazine itself, it seems best for us, at least for this year, to issue four issues only, rather than six, to be printed and mailed from California. But beyond this we are planning reprintings of books and booklets. The publication of the Concordant Version of the Old Testament as a single volume is a high priority, but this involves more than correcting typographical errors that crept into our present five-volume set. Many hours each week are devoted to this project as we endeavor to provide a higher
level of consistency and accuracy in our renderings. We are also aware that the CV “New Testament” will soon need to be reprinted. (And indeed a complete edition from Genesis to Revelation under one cover remains a fervent hope for us all.)

Realistically, as a whole this seems to be beyond our abilities and resources. For myself, after forty years of close involvement in the work of the Concern, I increasingly become aware of my mortality. We propose, but God disposes. Yet we want to let our plans and hopes be known to our readers, urging each of you to join us in prayer concerning these matters.

THE CURRENT ISSUE

This issue of Unsearchable Riches has as its theme, Paul’s evangel of grace, especially as it is presented in Romans. The manifestation of God’s righteousness apart from works of law, but rather through the faith of Jesus Christ, Who died for us while we were still sinners, may be given lip service, but it is widely resisted whenever anyone tries to take it seriously, and otherwise kept muzzled as much as possible. That grace should be seen as God’s method of dealing with human sin may be preached, but where this is so, more often than not it is accompanied with addenda of warnings and rules calculated to bring the believer under law. This is what happened to the ecclesias in Galatia, who were being swiftly transferred from that which called them in the grace of Christ to a distorted evangel of works (cf Gal.1:6; 3:1-4; 4:15,21; 5:1-6).

I myself have often felt uncomfortable with Romans 6 because it seemed to go in a different direction than the preceding chapters. But more and more, as I give it renewed attention and focus on what Paul is actually saying, and try to keep it in context as it logically follows from chapter 5, it is becoming a growing source of joy and peace,

What is Paul Saying?

for endurance in faith and expectation. It has been a great help to me to see the force of the subjunctive verb form in verse 4 (“should be walking”), resting, as it does, on the certainty of Christ being roused “through the glory of the Father,” and not on obligations I cannot fulfill. Again, to recognize that the obedience spoken of in verses 16-18 is a matter of setting my hearing under the message of grace, rather than under a message of law, is becoming increasingly rewarding to me, even though I have heard others point this out before. (I hope to take this up in my next installment on Romans.)

Along similar lines, I appreciate what Jim Coram is saying about the faith and faithfulness of Jesus Christ. This lies at the heart of the evangel. What a loss for believers who are subjected to the twisting of Romans 3:22 in modern translations which change Paul’s words concerning “Jesus Christ’s faith” to mean “[our] faith in Jesus Christ.” For God to be the Just Justifier (Rom.3:26), there must be a manifestly righteous justification. And that cannot rest on our faith. It can only be channeled by God through the faith of Jesus Christ.

As for the subject of baptism as Paul introduces it in Romans 6:3,4, who can hear what our apostle is saying amidst the countless theories arising from the traditional assumption that a rite of baptism in water is in view? The articles by A. E. Knoch and George Rogers serve well in getting us on track. “[Paul] uses baptism as a figure, not as an essential rite . . . We do not seek to cleanse our flesh in water, but we discard it in Christ’s death” (p.246). “The key of water baptism not only fails to turn in the lock of Romans 6:3, 4 and Galatians 3:27, but when forced, breaks it. Why not try the other key, that of baptism in spirit, which opens the lock instead of breaking it?” (p.257).

The article by Alan Burns was written over eighty years ago before the first edition of the CV was printed. Yet,
although we deleted a line or so and added a footnote, we generally retained his terminology and topical allusions as originally written. His clear and forceful defense of Paul's evangel as a message of God's deity and His grace for human sinners remains relevant for our own day. It is well stated that "There was nothing in Paul's gospel to make him ashamed" (p.286), nor for us as well.

About the same time that Alan Burns was writing the above, Brother Knoch wrote the following in reference to the message of God's conciliation of His enemies: "[It] is the essence of the evangel, that God is conciliated toward all. He is not concerned with sins, for Christ was made sin. No wrong doing can be a bar to His presence and favor. The evangel is good news, glad tidings concerning His Son, not bad news concerning the sinner. As dispensers of God's grace, let us absorb the spirit of love toward all, which pervades this secret administration. Not even the terrors of an orthodox hell are as potent to turn men from sin as the realization of His gracious attitude. Moreover, the preaching of the conciliation does not merely turn men away from sin. First of all it turns them to God. Abhorrence of sin is only one of the consequences. The driving force of fear is impotent compared with the drawing power of love."1

This brings me back to the matter of declaring and getting to know and perceiving what the evangel of God concerning His Son is saying to us. The more truly we hear and rehearse the words God speaks to us through His chosen apostle, while praying for growth in realization of what they say, the more surely we will be strengthened for endurance and patience with joy in our present lives. Thanks be to God for the all-sufficiency of His grace!

D.H.H.

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1. *Unsearchable Riches*, vol.17, p.3.
THE VARIOUS BAPTISMS

Baptism sets forth death and burial with Christ. But this is true only of the Uncircumcision, not of the Circumcision. The usage of words, their figurative force, is confined to each context, whereas the meaning is common to all. Baptism may figure one thing here and another there. Even among the Circumcision there is variety when its significance is in question. John's baptism was a sign of repentance, when done in water for entrance into the kingdom, even when it was a sham and performed by unbelieving Pharisees.

Pentecost added much to its significance. John had alluded to a baptism in spirit that was future, but Peter promises the spirit to those who are baptized (Acts 2:38). Yet when he carries the evangel to the proselyte Cornelius, the baptism of the spirit came first and cleansed the believers' hearts by faith, so that the baptism in water was only a confirmation needed for entrance into the earthly kingdom.

SALVATION BY BAPTISM

That baptism is “a saving ordinance” is put beyond question by Peter in his first epistle (3:21). He uses the deluge as a picture of the great cataclysm which precedes the kingdom. Noah and his family were saved through it. Baptism represents this as the means of saving them, if it is real, not merely a washing off of the external filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience toward God. Baptism is essential to the salvation of the Circumcision. Moreover it will be essential after the kingdom comes. He
who believes and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16). What tremendous efforts have been made to “explain” away these definite assertions, or to nullify them by means of other passages, from Paul’s epistles! Let us believe them and leave them where they belong. Then we are free to accept all of God’s revelations, without rejecting any. Faith demands baptismal salvation for those to whom it applies, but not for us, to whom it does not apply. Only in figure, in the baptism of Christ, in His death and burial, is baptism essential to our salvation.

Nevertheless, baptism holds a much more precious burden of truth for the Uncircumcision than any of its phases to the Circumcision. There was some progress even there, but Paul goes much further. In the epistle to the Romans, after having shown that none are righteous, none do good, that mankind is a complete failure in the flesh, he uses baptism to set forth death and resurrection with Christ. Undoubtedly some continued to be baptized in water while the kingdom was still in view. Yet Paul could not appeal to the experience of all, even at that early date. He does not tell them to be baptized. He ignores water baptism. He had already set forth the basis of salvation, and had not mentioned baptism, but rather excluded it by insisting on salvation by faith alone, apart from works. He uses baptism as a figure, not as an essential rite. The truth there taught is itself sufficient to make this practice futile.

We do not seek to cleanse our flesh in water, but we discard it in Christ’s death (Rom.6:3,4). The figure is an exceedingly powerful one. In water baptism we wash our own bodies to be cleansed. But this baptism into death is not our death, but His. The literal action is His, not ours. He had a baptism to be baptized with (Mark 20:22). But what need had He to repent, or have His sins pardoned, or His heart cleansed? Up to His sacrifice, none. At His offering of Himself for the sins of all mankind, He needed

His Baptism in Death

to be baptized more than any one else in the whole universe, for He was made a sin offering for all. His baptism led Him into death, for only so could He be saved from the sin and uncleanness which He bore. He was baptized for our sins there. We were in Him. It was not His own sins which were washed away, but ours. This is the only real baptism. It accomplishes all that the ritual only suggests, and far more than it ever meant to the Circumcision. We discard the symbol because we enjoy the substance.

We have great sympathy with the strenuous attempts made to “prove” that baptism demands immersion. It is true that baptism means dipize. But we can see that dip does not necessarily denote complete submersion when we read of our Lord and His disciples dipping their hand in the dish for a morsel (Matt.26:23; Mark 14:20; John 13:26).

If the figure were our baptism in water, as is generally supposed, then immersion would undoubtedly illustrate our burial and resurrection far better than the superofficial baptizing such as was given even couches among the Jews (Mark 7:4), and in which they indulged before lunch (Luke 11:38). But the truth is not set forth, by our baptism. What is there to signify death in a mere plunge beneath the water? There should be a more suggestive action to set this forth. Immersion, indeed, is a much better picture of burial. But resurrection is weakened by the lack of anything to signify death. This is all unnecessary, for in our Lord’s case, the cleansing which baptism in water merely figures, was done by actual death and burial and rousing. In our case the figure lies in our being in Him when He underwent the real cleansing at Golgotha.

Baptism in water did not break down the physical barriers which separated the saints of God, but baptism in spirit unites all into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, whether male or female (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal.3:28). We are all one in Christ Jesus. In the
Baptism Does Not

book of Acts, where both baptisms had a place, the tendency of spirit baptism to override these barriers caused much dissension and confusion. The case of Cornelius is most instructive to show that baptism in water does not bridge the gap between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision, but the baptism in spirit does. Peter went to Cornelius before the latter was baptized at all, and used the fact of spirit baptism, not water, to justify his fellowship with these proselytes. So it will be in the kingdom. The nations will be baptized, but that will not give them the place of Israel by any means.

Baptism in water cannot form a vital unity. Its history as recorded in the Scriptures, and as seen in the church, is ample evidence of this. Under John's baptism, which was definitely divorced from spirit baptism, the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees baptized, yet we may be sure that this external sign of unity with those who received our Lord, did not make them one with Christ, Who also was baptized, neither with His disciples. Probably all of our Lord's followers were baptized, for they baptized more than John (John 3:26), yet many of these left Him later, and walked with Him no longer (John 6:66). Among those nearest to Him, the twelve apostles, who were counted as closely united to Him, we find Judas, who was even entrusted with the funds. Baptism did not create a living union among the disciples of John and our Lord before the spirit was given.

Although baptism is essential to the salvation of the Circumcision and is the door into the kingdom, it did not unite all who received it into one body. The great gulf between the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision remained. As shown by the conduct of Peter and the believing Jews in the case of Cornelius, no union of the two classes could be considered by them, not even with proselytes of the gate. How much less with the nations as such! And this should bring about Unity

be perfectly understandable, in view of the promises to the physical seed of Abraham and David, which could never be carried over to all the nations without becoming void. No such commitments hinder God from uniting the saints into one body today, whether they belong to the Circumcision or the Uncircumcision, for our realm is above, in the heavens, and our blessings are spiritual. These have not been promised to anyone, hence may be enjoyed by the joint body, in which all the members are of equal rank, whether Circumcision or Uncircumcision.

In the kingdom itself the nations will be baptized, but the great disparity between them and Israel will be emphasized rather than removed. So far as we know, Israelites alone will do the baptizing and the teaching and the nations will yield obedience (Matt. 28:19,20). Instead of being done away, the chasm between Jew and Greek will be greater than ever.

Modern efforts to attain church unity are greatly hindered by ignorance on this point. Large bodies of believers as well as nominal churchmen consider some kind of baptism necessary for unity, if not for salvation. Some would never part with infant baptism, on the ground that God is a God of love, and that its omission "would bring intense suffering to millions of mothers and fathers who now rejoice that if their children were called in their early years to their Heavenly Father they were already inside of the fold of God."

The prevailing view as to the place of baptism is thus expressed in the Encyclopedia Britannica: "Christian baptism is the sacrament by which a person is initiated into the Christian church." This would include infant baptism as well as believers' baptism. No doubt this idea arose from the fact that baptism is requisite for entrance into the kingdom on earth, and this kingdom is usually confused with the church. Gradually it has been further confused
with other things, such as regeneration. A curious explanation was given in early times by Tertullian. At that time a figure of a fish was much used to represent a believer, because the initial letters of the words Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτῆρ (Jesus Christ God’s Son, Saviour) spells fish (ΙϹΤΗϹ). So he said, “We fishes are born in water, conformable to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This “proves” baptismal regeneration! It was called “the great circumcision,” because some held that baptism took the place of this rite.

BAPTISM PROGRESSIVE

Baptism has usually been treated as a stereotyped figure with the same force wherever it is found. Rather it is like a chameleon, which conforms to its surroundings. All figures are like that. The meaning of a word is constant in the Scriptures, but its usage, and especially its figurative applications, vary with its context. In Acts it is distinctly implied that John’s baptism was not the same as the later baptism (Acts 19:3,4). Few, it seems, have noticed this, and still go back to the rite under John.

Baptism is progressive. Even before Paul’s epistles there was an advance in its significance. The baptism at Pentecost had far more to it than before the sacrifice of Christ. John’s was one baptism of repentance for the forgiveness, or pardon, of sins. In Acts there were two baptisms, one in spirit and one in water. Then there is a return to one, in spirit. The Circumcision always require water. The Uncircumcision demand spirit.

John said, “I come baptizing in water” (John 1:26). But Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said, “You shall be obtaining the gratuity of the holy spirit” (Acts 2:38). Henceforth, in Acts, we have both water and spirit. The Circumcision received the holy spirit after they were baptized in water. But Cornelius, although he was only a proselyte, received

holy spirit before he was baptized in water. This is most significant, for before this, it seemed that water baptism was essential to the reception of the spirit. Once we see that spirit followed water with the Circumcision, but precedes it with the Uncircumcision, we should be ready to understand why there is a return to one baptism—that in spirit—when the Uncircumcision evangel of today was revealed by Paul.

Baptism in water certainly was a means of salvation, and will be again. The Scriptures distinctly teach it. For many years I rebelled at this, and tried to explain away the passages which taught it, because I filched the texts from the Circumcision and “applied” them to myself. How grand it is to be able to believe all Scripture and see the place which God has given each passage! Then we will not have to evade those which clearly teach salvation by water baptism. As I, myself, had undergone the rite, I was not prejudiced against it as those who had not been baptized. But I had studied Romans and could not reconcile the grace there revealed with salvation on any other grounds than grace and faith. Baptism was too near to salvation by works, which I abhorred.

Peter, in his epistle (1 Peter 3:20), confirms his Pentecostal practice. There was water enough in the deluge, and Noah and his relatives were saved through it. As a representation of this, Peter says, baptism is now saving you. And who would know better than Peter, in writing inspired epistles to the Circumcision? But he had had much experience of baptized disciples by this time. Many who had been baptized had fallen away when the kingdom did not materialize. So he qualifies his assertion to show that a mere superficial cleansing is not sufficient, it must be deeper. It is “not the putting off of the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience to God” (1 Peter 3:21).

Another passage, which clearly teaches salvation by water
Baptism Saves the Circumcision

baptism, is at the close of Mark's account: He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, yet he who disbelieves shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). I am unutterably thankful that this no longer disturbs me as it once did. Convinced as I was by my study of Romans that God alone is my Saviour, I could not understand how it could be otherwise here, until my eyes were opened to the various phases of God's operations, and the difference between the Circumcision evangel and that for today. In one, water baptism is essential. In the other, Paul thanked God that he had baptized no more, because God had not commissioned him to baptize, but to bring the evangel. For the Circumcision there must be baptism in water, even when the baptism of the spirit is added. But when God is not dealing with the flesh, then spirit baptism is necessary, and water is not needed.

A. E. Knoch

BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH

During the time of the readjustment of the saints, covered by Paul's early epistles, it is vital to note just what kind of baptism is before us, and to carefully scan the figures used. We are apt to put water baptism as the background for every reference. Our Lord referred, not only to water and spirit baptisms, but also to His death as the element of baptism (Luke 12:50). Is not this referred to by Paul in the sixth of Romans? We are baptized into His death. We do not go down into "a watery grave" of our own. We were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, that, even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also should be walking in newness of life (Rom.6:3,4).

May we never reason from one baptism to another, especially when it is a figure. Death, entombment and rousing are not implied by John's baptism, for many who received it later rejected their Messiah. Thank God for the baptism of John in water! Thank God for the baptism of Peter, which not only brought pardon, but the spirit! But, above all, let us thank Him for our baptism, our death, entombment and rousing in Christ, which leads to life and glory supernal, far beyond aught that was ever dreamed of by the Circumcision!

A. E. Knoch
BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

We died to sin (Rom. 6:2). As surely as Christ died to sin, just so surely all who are in Christ Jesus were baptized into His death, and thus we died to sin. The relation to sin of the saint who is in Christ Jesus is exactly the same as Christ’s present relation to it. As He lives to God so in Him the saint lives to God. This is not an experience to be enjoyed, but a revelation as to what has happened to Christ and to all who were baptized into Him. Our duty is not to experience it, but to reckon it true.

Many believers find it difficult to believe the assertion that they died to sin. That they ought to die to it they will admit, but, they say, experience contradicts the statement that they died. Yet it is plain that the apostle affirms, not only of himself, nor of a special class, but of all who are in Christ Jesus, that they died to sin. He does not appeal to experience, either his own or theirs. He declares the truth on which they are to reckon. He points to Christ’s death to sin, His entombment, His resurrection, and His present life to God and says that those in Christ Jesus participate in all these achievements. There is no reference to the subjective condition or experience of the believer. Let us hear him expound.

ROMANS 6:3

Or, if the assertion that we died to sin puzzles you, are you ignorant of that which all saints ought to know, that they were baptized into Christ’s death, and thus they died to sin? You know they died to sin in this way, or you are
ignorant of the fact of baptism into Christ Jesus. The suggestion of ignorance of this truth gives the question a tone of reproof. The objector's only excuse for suggesting that Paul's evangel favors persistence in sin is his ignorance of that part of it which makes such persistence impossible. Whether or not there were any saints who were so ignorant in Paul's day, it is certain that there are many today who deserve the rebuke as much as the legalist objector, for they seek to explain away the fact of death to sin, and urge upon men the supposed duty of dying to it. They put the believer's death in the place of Christ's. Spiritual men flee from the ignorance which, on the one hand, makes the objector reach so absurd a conclusion, and which, on the other hand, mutilates the evangel.

As many as is a pronoun of quantity, and it means all without exception who are baptized into Christ are baptized into His death. So that baptism into His death is not something saints have yet to seek. There are not some saints who died to sin and others who did not. All are baptized into Christ Jesus.

The only place in this epistle where baptism is mentioned is in these two verses, where the fact of spiritual union with Christ is being declared. The saints are in Christ Jesus because they were baptized into Him. Nothing less than an actual spiritual union, which gives a saint a place before God in Christ Jesus, can meet the requirements of the argument of chapters six to eight. It is a sad proof of our departure from the Pauline revelation that there is so little agreement among saints and teachers as to what baptism into Christ Jesus is and what it accomplishes for the baptized.

This departure is because the majority are thinking of the wrong baptism. This error explains the confusion and disagreement that have marked the long controversy about the meaning and efficacy of baptism in general and about this passage in particular. They who think of the immersion of believers in water in the name of Jesus Christ are not thinking in harmony with this revelation.

RITE OR REALITY?

As spiritual facts rather than eloquent ritual are in point, Paul cannot be speaking of water baptism, but of baptism in spirit, because the ideas of union with Christ, of death with Him, of entombment together with Him, and of resurrection and being alive to God in Him are all spiritual facts. Consistency demands that, if there is such a thing as spiritual baptism, that is what the word here means. Only when it is seen that the baptism is that in the spirit can the passage be cleared of all the difficulties which have been imported into it by the assumption that water baptism is meant. Every spiritually minded student of Scripture recoils from the idea that a ritual baptism can actually incorporate the baptized in the body of Christ. But when it is seen that the baptism is that of the spirit, a glorious, satisfying revelation of the evangel gladdens our heart, enlightens our intellect, and banishes perplexity.

Why do good men cling so tenaciously to the external, physical rite and forget the spiritual reality? It is true that the rite is full of significance, and yet it is devoid of real spiritual efficacy. When water baptism was instituted, it was plainly taught that it was but a symbol of spirit baptism. In Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts at the first mention of water baptism the speaker in each case points from John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit. People persistently cling to John, though he steadily points to the One stronger than he, Who should come after him and baptize in spirit instead of water (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Acts 1:5 our Lord again distinguishes between John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit. People persistently cling to John, though he steadily points to the One stronger than he, Who should come after him and baptize in spirit instead of water (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Acts 1:5 our Lord again distinguishes between John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit. People persistently cling to John, though he steadily points to the One stronger than he, Who should come after him and baptize in spirit instead of water (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Acts 1:5 our Lord again distinguishes between John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit. People persistently cling to John, though he steadily points to the One stronger than he, Who should come after him and baptize in spirit instead of water (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Acts 1:5 our Lord again distinguishes between John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit. People persistently cling to John, though he steadily points to the One stronger than he, Who should come after him and baptize in spirit instead of water (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Acts 1:5 our Lord again distinguishes between John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit. People persistently cling to John, though he steadily points to the One stronger than he, Who should come after him and baptize in spirit instead of water (Matt.3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). In Acts 1:5 our Lord again distinguishes between John's baptism in water to Christ's baptism in holy spirit.
His Death to Sin makes these days.” This promise of the Father was fulfilled to the company of believing Israelites who met in the Temple on the day of Pentecost. Again, when, as Peter preached to the proselyte Cornelius and his company, the holy spirit fell on them, Peter said: “Now I am reminded of the Lord’s declaration as He said that ‘John indeed baptizes in water, yet you shall be baptized in holy spirit’” (Acts 11:16; 10:45). The key of water baptism not only fails to turn in the lock of Romans 6:3,4 and Galatians 3:27, but, when forced, breaks it. Why not try the other key, that of baptism in spirit, which opens the lock instead of breaking it? The error of ignoring spirit baptism in these passages not only vitiates most of the explanations of them, but worse still, leads to a direct denial of any baptism in the spirit which actually introduces the saints into Christ Jesus.

IN SPIRIT

Baptism in spirit is quite as indispensable a part of our salvation as is our justification. It ranks in importance with the impartation of His life by the spirit, and all who have life in Christ are baptized into Him, are sealed, anointed, and are given the earnest of the inheritance of the saints in light. Only by baptism in spirit can anyone be placed into Christ Jesus and put on Christ.

All who are baptized into Christ Jesus are made one with Him in His saving deeds. They are not only baptized into the Person, but are baptized into His death also. The Person Who died to sin, was entombed, was roused and is living to God. None of these are private acts wrought for Himself alone; they are for all men. Only those who are in Him by spiritual baptism are actually sharers of His deeds. The statement that we died to sin is true only of those who are baptized into His death. The special aspect of His death is His death to sin. We must insist on the truth so clearly stated in the following verses that it is

a death not for sin but to sin, so that His connection with the race sin, which He was made, has been completely and finally broken. What the death which severed His connection with sin means to Him it must mean to all who are baptized into it.

Christ escaped from sin only by death. If we did not die with Him to sin, sin still has a claim on us that we cannot meet even should we die the second death. His death to sin—what shall we say of it? It was for all mankind. It is actually ours by our baptism into it. It is no “mystical,” subjective death to sin wrought by identification of the human will with His. It is the historic, objective condemnation of the whole race and its sin in the person of the second Man. That death was for me; more than that, it was actually made mine by baptism into Christ, so that I am dead to sin just as He is.

INTO HIS DEATH

It is not baptism into death simply, but into His death. The word His is the most important one in the clause. In every respect His death was unlike every other. He is unique in all He is and does. God only knows all that Christ’s death was to Him and to the universe. Death is the common doom of all the sons of Adam, yet He was not subject to that death. Other men are subjects of sin and death and condemnation: He knew no sin, was not mortal, nor doomed to death. Other deaths affect only the individual who dies: His death was racial. Others die in their sin: He died for and to their sin. He died for all: all others needed Him to die for them. By the common death of mankind God is not conciliated to the world: by His death we, being enemies, were conciliated to God. If man’s death could crucify the old humanity, annul the body of sin, and release from slavery to sin, then Christ’s death was a superfluity and without cause. None ever tasted death as He, or
Deliverance and Blessings

endured the shame of the cross, the estrangement of God, and the curse of the law. There are depths and heights and lengths and breadths of meaning and value in His death that we cannot apprehend, but since we are baptized into it, all of its deliverance and wealth of blessing is ours. My death can do none of the things for God, for mankind, or for myself that Christ's death to sin did. I die because I am a sinner: the death He died was possible because He knew no sin. My death cannot condemn or remove my own sin: His death can annul sin in its totality.

Anyone who assumes to speak with adequacy of His death has not begun to think about it, yet we are sure that the meditations of our heart on this and all subjects will be acceptable to God in the measure in which they conform to His Word. We should listen so carefully as to hear what He says and avoid all misrepresentation.

George L. Rogers

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GOD’S POWER FOR BELIEVERS

No scripture is to be taken out of context, and this is certainly so of Romans 6. It is solidly built on the evangel of God concerning His Son as it has been unfolded in the preceding five chapters. What Paul has been saying concerning God’s righteousness and love and grace, concerning Jesus Christ’s faith in dying for sinners, and concerning the significance of Christ’s death as it relates to all mankind, and most certainly as it relates in a special way now to us who are believing this evangel of God concerning His Son—all of this is the foundation of what he is now saying.

THE EVANGEL WHICH WE ARE BELIEVING

In God’s grace we are justified through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus (Rom.3:24). This gracious deliverance of sinners from the desperate situation described in Romans 1:18-3:20 is due to the faith of Jesus Christ. He died for the sake of (literally over) sinners. This is a work which manifests God’s righteousness in that it does not rest at all on human acts of law, it is for everyone, and it takes into account every sin and offense. It is not a righteousness that mystifies us. It is made manifest in the evangel (Rom.3:20). Christ died for all, for all are sinners, irreverent and infirm (Rom.3:23; 5:6-8). Through that one righteous act of the One, Jesus Christ, all mankind will ultimately enjoy life’s justifying and be constituted righteous (Rom. 5:18,19). Yet even now this justification is on all who are believing (Rom.3:21,22). We are those to whom the consummations of the eons have attained (1 Cor.10:11).
Consequently, in accord with this grace, God, in the present administration, reckons righteousness to us who are believing His evangel concerning His Son. “To the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt. Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness” (Rom.4:4,5). We are justified through the faith of Jesus Christ, and this is put to our account when we believe what God says to us, namely, that Christ died for our sins, was entombed and has been roused (cf 1 Cor. 15:3,4). Justification, achieved through the faith of Jesus Christ, is reckoned to us “who are believing on Him Who rouses Jesus our Lord from among the dead, Who was given up because of our offenses, and was roused because of our justifying” (Rom.4:24,25). It is only in a figurative sense that we can say that we are justified by our faith. Our faith does not literally justify us, but in God’s grace, the justification which has been secured through the faith of Jesus Christ is put to our account when we believe.

This is basic to our understanding and appreciation of Romans 6.

THE CONCILIATION

Furthermore (we being justified in God’s grace by the faith of Jesus Christ, and blessed with the grace of righteousness reckoned already to us who are believing), God enriches this grace by granting access to Himself in peace with the expectation of all that constitutes God’s glory (Rom.5:1,2). Being enemies, nevertheless we were conciliated to God through the death of His Son, and thus shall be saved in His life from indignation and all the sin and offense that calls it forth (Rom.5:10,11). This also is not of ourselves, but rather comes to us through our Lord Jesus Christ, through His death. We have obtained the conciliation which has been granted by God (Rom.5:11).

The Grace of God Superexceeds every increase which humanity adds to the offense of Adam (Rom.5:20). The reign of Sin in death which oppresses us all was overthrown with the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ, although this will not be put into experienced effect until all are vivified in Christ (1 Cor.15:22). Death still tyrannizes, but its doom is certain. The reign of Grace shall rise in its place.

Yet already the grace which consists of God’s righteousness operating through the faith of Jesus Christ has been applied to and set over us who are believing. Thus it becomes God’s power for ongoing salvation in our walk and lives (cf Rom.1:16).

It is in view of this evangel that Paul now asks the question, “What, then, shall we be declaring?”
The conjunction “then” is used to introduce the logical conclusion of what has just been said. What is the logical conclusion of the evangel of God’s grace which has just been evangelized? Most particularly, what shall we be declaring to be the logical conclusion of the epochal declaration of Romans 5:20,21, that “law came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing. Yet where [the] sin increases, [the] grace superexceeds, that, even as [the] Sin reigns in death, thus [the] Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for life eonian, through Jesus Christ, our Lord”?

Shall we, then, be declaring that we may be persisting in sin that [the] grace should be increasing? May it not be coming to that!

Then, what shall we be declaring?

Paul’s answer is to refocus our attention on the evangel and illuminate it in even more glorious light. Now he draws our attention to God’s grace to us in Christ Jesus in expanded detail, showing how it powerfully affects us in a deeply personal way. This is what we are to be declaring (6:1), getting to know (6:6), believing (6:8), perceiving with the eyes of our heart (6:9) and reckoning as so (6:11). We are saved in grace apart from our acts, but such acts of faith as declaring the revelation of the evangel and knowing what God has said to us and perceiving its glories with our minds and reckoning what is so to be so, are instrumental in being saved, day by day.

THE EVANGEL EXPANDED

The message itself, as it now is evangelized in Romans 6:1-11 continues as a message of God’s grace through and in His Son, Jesus Christ. But now it is enlarged with the illumination of its significance to us personally, as believers. Now we hear what has happened to us because Christ died for our sakes, and what shall happen because of this, as well as its significance for us in the present. These favors, secured and certain, both relating to the past and relating to the future, are stored with spiritual power for the present, in our lives.

What, then, has happened?

1. We died to sin.
2. We are baptized into Christ and thus baptized into His death.
3. We were entombed together with Him through baptism into death.
4. We have become planted together in the likeness of Christ’s death.
5. Our old humanity was crucified together with Him.
6. We have been justified from Sin.

And what, then, shall be the effect of what has happened?

1. Even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus also we shall be walking in newness of life.
2. We shall be of the resurrection.
3. In that our old humanity was crucified together with Christ, our body of Sin shall be nullified.
4. We shall, by no means, be still slaving for Sin.
5. We shall be living together with Christ.
6. We shall be living to God as Christ is living to Him.

This is all a matter of grace. It is not of ourselves. But it has a powerful effect on us. In accord with this, A. E. Knoch wrote: “A realization of our death to sin and life in Christ will give us power to cope with sin, always remembering that sin cannot bring us into disfavor because of the superexceeding grace.”

1. cf then, Keyword Concordance, p.302.
2. Concordant Commentary, p.236.
THE EVANGEL OF OUR DEATH TO SIN

We died to sin, for we are baptized into Christ Jesus, and into His death. Indeed, we were entombed together with Him through baptism into death, having become planted together in the likeness of Christ’s death. Our old humanity was crucified together with Him. For one who dies in this way has been justified from Sin!

When Christ died, all died (2 Cor.5:14), for Christ died for the sake of sinners, and all are sinners (Rom.3:23; 5:8). This is the key to the manifestation of God’s righteousness. Every sinner and every sin must be obliterated from God’s creation, yet in such a way that all will be brought into the glorious freedom of the sons of God. And this will be the position when God is All in all. It is through the one just act of Jesus Christ that sinners will be constituted righteous (Rom.5:18,19).

But this is to speak of what was accomplished in the past and of the full realization and enjoyment of it in the far future. There is a long expanse of time, filled with many events and many generations of human lives, between Christ’s death on the cross and the exultant enjoyment by all mankind of its deliverance into life and righteousness. Paul speaks now of the special way this evangel relates to us with respect to the past and future, so that it may bring spiritual power into our lives in the present. What happened at the cross has no meaning to unbelievers, nor have the benefits of Christ’s death for them been placed on them. But to believers, this evangel already has a great deal of meaning regarding both what has happened and what will happen, and this, in turn, holds a great deal of significance for the believer today.

We are believing that Christ died for us, and in believing this we are believing that we died. But more to the point, we are believing that, in being identified with the death of Christ, we are those who died to sin and shall be living to God.

This does not mean that we cannot sin at present, or that we are now living as we shall be living, for we remain descendants of Adam, infected by the operation of death in our flesh. But it does speak of a reality. Just as it is true that God has reckoned righteousness to us who are believing, so is it true that God has placed us into the position of death to sin which Christ achieved for all mankind. Just as it is true that God has justified us through the blood of Christ and conciliated us to Himself, so is it true that we stand before Him having died to sin. It is not a matter of our experience. It is a matter of God’s grace in and through Jesus Christ.

We have died to sin and to all its consequences.

Commenting on our death to sin as expressed in Ephesians 2:1 (“And you, being dead to your offenses and sins”), A. E. Knoch wrote: “It is not death in the absolute sense which is in view. It is death relative to sin, to offenses, to lust. These things, if allowed a place, would debar us from all blessing. It is marvelous to escape their consequences by faith in the blood of Christ . . .”

Marvelous indeed to know the grace of our death to sin! We have been granted that happiness for which David longed, for God is by no means reckoning sin to us (Rom.4:8). Sin along with its consequence of condemnation (cf Rom.5:16) is not being reckoned to us. “Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in Christ Jesus” (Rom.8:1).

BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH

Paul does not refer here to a rite involving water and administered by human beings. Baptism in water does not

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do what God has done in spirit. We need to know what Paul is talking about here. We are not to be ignorant of the fact that we are baptized into the death of Christ, and we need to understand that this is what makes it so that we died to sin and its consequences.

We are not ignorant that God is not reckoning our sins to us, and that He has put it to our account that we are righteous. This means that God sees us as we are in Christ, identified with Him in His death and entombment, and that we shall indeed be vivified in Him and live as He lives now, living to God. So also we are not to be ignorant that God has baptized us into Christ and into His death. This is a corollary to the fact that God is reckoning righteousness to us. It is also parallel to the fact that, when we believe the gospel of our salvation God seals us with the holy spirit of promise (Eph.1:13).

We see the pattern even more clearly in 1 Corinthians 12:12-19 where it is written that “in one spirit we all are baptized into one body.” This is the work of God, for God placed the members, each one of them, in the body according as He wills. So also in Romans 6:5, Paul writes that we have been planted together in the likeness of Christ’s death. This is surely the operation of God in His grace to us who are believing.

In spirit, God has even now applied to us who are believing what has been achieved for every sinner when Christ died.

That is what we are getting to know as we are believing the gospel. This is the logical conclusion to the gospel that God’s righteousness as it is manifested through the faith of Jesus Christ has been placed on us who are believing.

ENTOMBED TOGETHER WITH HIM

The logical conclusion to being baptized into the death of Christ is that we were entombed together with Him into death. Clearly this is a statement of fact concerning what happened when we were baptized into Christ’s death. It is not something we are required to do ourselves or could do. It is an extension of the evangel, an elaboration of its details. God’s righteousness demands that we be put to death and be put away into the state of death. This was done when Christ died for all and was entombed, but it has not been applied yet to anyone except to us who are believing. What grace that we have been entombed together with Christ! That is our position before God. We stand there justified and conciliated and dead to sin, wholly identified with Christ in His death and entombment.

EVEN AS, THUS ALSO

We followed Paul’s thoughts in Romans 5:12-21 where he compared the one man, Adam, to the One Man, Jesus Christ, and the one offense, in disobedience, of Adam, to the one just act, in obedience, of Jesus Christ. Just as was so of the one, thus also is true of the Other. Both have a critical and all-encompassing effect on all humanity, apart from any input from us. Now in Romans 6:4, the apostle writes:

 Even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, 
Thus also we should be walking in newness of life.

Paul cannot mean, “Even as Christ was roused from among the dead, thus also we ought to be walking in newness of life.” The two thoughts do not match, nor does the second thought follow from the first. What happened to Christ through the glory of the Father does not entail an obligation on our part to walk in newness of life. Paul is bringing a message of grace, not law. Our walking in newness of life is compared as a matter of real likeness with the Father’s glorious power in the rousing of Christ from among the dead. As Christ was roused, thus also we shall
be walking in newness of life. Both are by means of the glory of the Father.

In Greek, the aorist subjunctive verb (indicated in the CV by the word “should”) is closely allied in its usage with the future indicative. It serves many times to draw our attention to a preceding statement which stands as its basis. We see this in verse 6 where the aorist subjunctive is indicated by the word “may.” The contingency expressed in the verb “may be nullified” rests on whether or not it is certain that “our old humanity was crucified.” In effect Paul is saying that our old humanity was crucified so that the body of Sin shall be nullified. But he words it as he does in order that we give careful attention to the basis of the nullifying of the body of Sin. So also, in verse 4, in effect, Paul is saying, “Even as Christ was roused from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus we also shall be walking in newness of life, through the glory of the Father.”

THE GLORY OF THE FATHER

This is the evan gel of our future walk in newness of life gained for us by means of the glory of the Father. His glory is His power in giving life, a power which is exercised in righteousness (as we learned in Romans 3:21-26), and, in that He is the Father, a power which is exercised in love (as we learned in Romans 5:5-8). Walking in newness of life shall be enjoyed to the full, for we are glorying in expectation of the glory of God.

Nevertheless, as for the present, as we are getting to know that we shall be experiencing this newness of living as surely as Christ was roused through the glory of the Father, the characteristics of that future life begin to take hold in our present life, in accord with the earnest of the spirit.

Let us, then, be taking account of all aspects of the evang el of God, reckoning to be so what it declares to be so.

D.H.H.
THE EVANGEL OF
THE FAITH OF CHRIST

Question:

A. E. Knoch, in *The Concordant Commentary*, states the following concerning Romans 3:21-27:

(v.21:) “The previous section found no one just but God Himself. No one has been able to attain God’s standard by doing good or keeping the law. How then may we become just before God? Only by becoming partakers of His righteousness.

(v.22:) “The channel through which we may obtain this righteousness is the faith of Jesus Christ. He alone of all mankind, not only did good and kept the law, but He believed God even when He smote Him for our sins. It is out of His faith for our faith (1:17).

(v.24:) “They hated Him without a cause—gratuitously. Such is the meaning of this precious word. Justification on any other ground than the free and unforced favor of God is impossible, for none deserve it. But now Christ Jesus has effected a deliverance from all judgment, which is absolutely free to all who believe.

(v.25:) “The important point in this passage, however, is not our justification, but God’s, for it is His righteousness which we receive. In Israel He had made provision for atonement, or a shelter from sins. This was not strictly just, for the penalty of these sins was still due. The answer to this, as well as the answer to His present work is found in the blood of Christ. That settles for sins, past, present and future. That vindicates God’s justice and makes it possible for Him to be the Justifier of all who are of the faith of Jesus.

(v.27:) “Such a deliverance, entirely on the ground
A Pattern of Sound Words

of grace, bars all boasting, unless it be in Christ and in His God, Who has become our Justifier.”

Mr. Knoch’s claim here is that we become partakers of God’s righteousness on the basis of Christ’s own faith (that is, in contrast to our own faith). He states that the words “out of faith” speak of Christ’s own faith (“His faith”), and plainly indicates that the words “faith of Jesus Christ” (v.22, AV) and “faith of Jesus” (v.26) are thus to be understood.

I note as well that while Knoch elsewhere (that is, in his comments upon various other Scripture texts) affirms the eventual salvation of all mankind, his comments here on Romans 3:21-27 speak only of God as “our Justifier,” even as of justification being granted “absolutely free to all who believe.”

I would appreciate it if you could provide an explanation of the “genitive case,” especially as it is used in the Greek phrase πίστεως Iêsou Christou (and similar phrases) which appears in Romans 3:22. While these Greek words are rendered “Jesus Christ’s faith” in the Concordant Version, and “faith of Jesus Christ” in the Authorized Version and a few others, in most other translations they are nevertheless rendered, “faith in Jesus Christ” (for example, NAS, NIV, NKJV).

Precisely, what is an accurate and impartial translation of πίστεως Iêsou Christou? And, most importantly, how should these words be properly understood in their context?

**Answer:**

With respect to the primary constituents of our faith itself, we must “have,” and implement, “a pattern of sound words, which [we] hear from [the apostle Paul], in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim.1:13; cp 1 Tim.6:3). These are “…words…taught by the spirit, [by means of which we are] matching spiritual blessings with spiritual words” (1 Cor.2:12,13).

We need not be put off by the grammatical term “geni-

tive case,” though it does need to be understood. It merely speaks of the associative relation between a certain noun and another noun to which it refers. This relation is represented in English by the preposition “of,” whereas in Greek it is marked by a case ending, that of the genitive case.

The possessive case in modern English, corresponds most closely to the Greek genitive case’s subjective usage, which is also and by far its most common usage. An example of such usage may be found in the words of Ephesians 2:8: “…God’s approach present,” which in Greek is: Θεοῦ τὸ δόρον (literally, “OF-God THE oblation”), which speaks of “the approach present of God.”

Grammatical case is the syntactical relationship of a noun, pronoun, or adjective to other words in a sentence, generally indicated by declensional endings in inflected languages (such as Greek), or by prepositions and word order in non-inflected languages (such as English).

The Greek genitive case includes the English possessive case. The genitive’s presence is indicated in the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT’s sublinear by of- (when no connective is present; e.g., “son of David,” Matt.1:20). Of is intended as a neutral means by which to indicate the genitive (that is, to indicate that, in some respect, “this is of that”).

The main thing to keep in mind concerning the “genitive case,” is that, in all instances, it speaks of that which is “of” something else: of the relation between one entity and another. The genitive case, therefore, may always be neutrally (i.e., non-interpretively) represented thus in translation, by the preposition “of.”

In all instances, then, where one thing is said to be “of” another (e.g., “the love of God,” or “the grace of Christ”), we should always ask ourselves: In what sense does, or in what respect is, that which is primarily in view related to that to which it pertains. This is to say, How, or in what way, is it the case that one thing is said to be “of” another thing?
Determination of Grammatical Sense

In a given instance, upon critical reflection, in careful consideration of the context and nature of the case at hand, it should become evident what the “of-relationship” in view is, between one thing and another. The determination of sense here, however, in any certain instance, is ultimately not one of translation, but of correct interpretive judgment—whether of the Greek or its English equivalent. As is usually the case, one thing may be said to be “of” another, because it belongs to (or is the possession of) another. On the other hand, though such a usage is uncommon, one thing may be said to be of another—if it is clear that this is what is specifically in view—in consideration of its being directed toward another, which is the object thereof.

THROUGH FAITH OF CHRIST,
OR FAITH IN CHRIST?

Though the Concordant Version sometimes renders the genitive as an adjective (e.g., “His messengers OF-POWER” as “His powerful messengers,” 2 Thess.1:7), otherwise, the CV nearly always represents the genitive case either by the English “of;” or by the English possessive case.

1. It is not that the Concordant Version never reflects the predilections of its translator, but that because of its own system and principles, these are greatly minimized within its pages. Even a generally “substantially literal” yet necessarily idiomatic version such as the Concordant Version, can by no means always provide a strict, word-for-word “formal correspondence” between its Greek text and its own renderings. Therefore, the CONCORDANT GREEK TEXT’s English sublinear even as other worthy grammatical tools, may well be consulted in all instances of critical interest.

2. An exception is the genitive “faith OF-TRUTH” in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, which the 1976 edition renders “faith in the truth.” Perhaps the idiom is along the lines of the thought that the Thessalonians’ faith partook of the nature of truth. Thus it was “of-truth faith.” Truth indeed fosters confidence in itself. Like ourselves, the Thessalonians found faith growing in them as they received truth; hence, “faith of-God.”


4. “And answering, Jesus is saying to them, ‘if you have faith of God, verily, I am saying to you that whosoever may be saying to this mountain, ‘Be picked up and cast into the sea,’ and may not be doubting in his heart, but should be believing that what he is speaking is occurring, it shall be his, whatsoever he may be saying.” It should be noted that genuine “of-God faith” (as opposed to mere fleshly credulity in its name), necessarily incorporates the ablative sense of faith which is from God, according as He has spoken. Only then, in turn, does it become faith that is also God-ward.
Even on grammatical grounds the case here for an “objective” genitive (i.e., for a faith that is directed Christ-ward) is very weak. Yet if one insists on such an interpretation, it would then become necessary to refer this “faith in Christ” not to man but to God, in order for this expression to accord with the evangel itself, the revelation that justification is gratuitous and in grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus.

In the Pauline epistles, apart from the disputed cases in which the genitive is “Christ” or its equivalent, in every case (approximately twenty-four instances) in which “faith” is followed by a proper noun or pronoun in the genitive case, the genitive is unmistakably subjective. Twenty instances refer to the faith of believers; one to the faith of anyone who believes; two to the faith of Abraham; and one to the faithfulness of God.

In fact, the main reason for the acceptance of this interpretation (which is made a part of the translation itself in most modern Bibles) is the age-old tradition that affirms that one is saved by his own believing. Such a notion is then read into the text. In turn, it is further claimed that through such very passages, Paul himself sets forth the self-same teaching. Thus, through such circular reasoning, the rendering “faith in Christ” is justified by its advocates.

All that the Greek itself says and conveys, however, is: of-Christ faith; that is, faith that, in some respect, has reference, or relates to Christ. The translation “faith in Christ,” then, is not really a translation at all, but an interpretation. And, as popularly understood, as we shall see below, it is certainly a mistaken interpretation as well.

My reply to your question, then, is that in Romans 3:22 (and like phrases found elsewhere), “faith of Jesus Christ” (in Romans 3:22), is the accurate and impartial way to translate the Greek phrase, πίστεως Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

It is critical that we be clear here about this matter: What the Greek says, in precise English equivalence, is the Phrase, “Faith of Jesus Christ” one thing: “faith of Jesus Christ.” Then, to represent the apostle Paul as saying “Jesus Christ’s faith” is to construe the Greek as straightforwardly subjective (i.e., as equivalent to the English possessive); to represent him as saying “faith in Christ” (that is, by corollary, “in” Him, in that it is, albeit in a somewhat strained sense, exercised “toward” Him) is to construe it objectively. Both of these are construals, which is to say, interpretations. If we would simply represent the Greek in English form, however, apart from construal—whatever we may understand concerning these words—we must say “faith of Jesus Christ.”

It is simply mistaken, besides fatuous, then, to claim either (1), that “Jesus Christ’s faith” is the “true and literal Scriptural meaning” (or similarly that, “faith of Jesus Christ,” when “properly translated and understood, necessarily means Jesus Christ’s own faith”), or (2), that “the consensus of recognized scholars is that the meaning of the Greek is ‘faith in Christ.’”

Your further question: “. . . most importantly [of all], how should these words [‘faith of Jesus Christ’] be properly understood in their context?” will be the subject of the remainder of this present article.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST’S FAITH

“The evangel speaks of the death of Christ. In Romans 3:22 this is expressed by the words “the faith of Jesus Christ.” In this message concerning the humbling of God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, there is a revelation of God’s righteousness not manifested earlier in the pages of Scripture, though attested by types and foreshadows . . .

Once we understand that the apostle refers to God’s own righteousness being made manifest (cf Rom.1:17; 3:21,22), we can readily see that this cannot be made known by means of our faith. Our believing is flawed, even that of the most mature of believers. Justification is not gained by
what we do, as Romans 3:20 has made clear. The evangel Paul is bringing declares that human works of law for justification are replaced, not by human works of faith, but by that great work of faith undertaken and completed by Jesus Christ. Human faith is important; it is the means by which we receive that which Christ has gained for us. But our faith is not brought into the picture here until later in verse 22 after the message concerning Christ Jesus has been set before us.

“God’s perfect righteousness in gaining our salvation can be seen only as it is manifested in the faith of Jesus Christ in His steadfast reliance on God’s word and His faith-obedience to the death of the cross. The evangel concerns Jesus Christ and what He did for sinners. It is in this message that God’s righteousness is revealed . . .

“To believe what God has said is to be faithful to what God has said, and the experiences of life, day in and day out, inevitably expose the weaknesses of human faith by means of human unfaithfulness.

“Hence, in the language of Scripture, both Hebrew and Greek, the word “faith” implies both believing and remaining faithful to what is believed. For human beings both faith and faithfulness are imperfect, or rather, for human beings faith/faithfulness (a single concept) is imperfect. But for Jesus Christ faith/faithfulness is without flaw, without weakness of any sort.”

THE WORK AND FAITH OF CHRIST

The great majority of advocates of the objective genitive here, having asserted that the faith in view is faith of which Christ is its object (this is all there is, as such, to the objective-construal position by itself, which claim alone at least might be an innocent enough claim), then proceed further on at this juncture so as to make their actual primary claim—a claim which goes far beyond that of a mere objective construal.

Those who speak here of “faith in Christ,” do not merely make an objective construal. Instead, they go far beyond this by asserting their further claim, which is that this “faith”—which they take to be “in Christ” (i.e., directed toward Christ)—is faith that is directed toward Christ by ourselves.

It never seems to occur to those who speak of our own “faith in Christ” as being, according to their claim, that by which we are justified, that even an objective construal here does not entail that this faith which has Christ as its object, is our faith in Christ—our faith of which Christ is its object.

Is it not so that “the faith(fulness) of God” Himself (Rom.3:3) is the decisive and far more important faith(fulness) that is at least ultimately in view here, in Romans 3:22, and is the ultimate cause of our justification, in the faith(fulness) of Jesus Christ Himself, which is the proximate cause of our justification?

And is it not so as well that the righteousness of God is revealed, manifested, and displayed, in the strong and perfect faith(fulness) of Christ, not in our own weak and imperfect faith, in which it is, at best, but dimly and pitifully reflected?

We perceive the “faith of Jesus Christ” most especially in His faithful obedience unto the death of the cross. It was there, as was ever His practice, that He especially relied on the living God, putting His confidence in Him, “being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil.2:8).

It is therefore the faith(fulness) of God Himself, in the faith(fulness) of Christ Himself, through which we are “being now justified in His blood” (Rom.5:9)—“through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom.3:24).

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All is out of God (Rom. 11:36). Thus, ultimately—that is, in the sense “that there is no other God except One” (1 Cor. 8:4)—therefore, it is so, even as Paul declares, that “there is one God—the Father, out of Whom all is—and we for Him, and one Lord—Jesus Christ, through Whom all is—and we through Him. But not in all is there this knowledge” (1 Cor. 8:6,7).

Clearly, then, God’s righteousness is (1) revealed (Rom. 1:17), (2) manifested (Rom. 3:21), and (3) displayed (Rom. 3:26), in that “faith [which is] of Jesus Christ,” in Christ’s own faithfulness, which is itself the result of God’s own faithfulness.

Just as we were not conciliated to God through our faith in the death of His Son, but through the death of His Son (Rom. 5:10), neither are we justified through our faith in the blood of Christ, but through the blood of Christ itself (Rom. 5:9; that is, His awful suffering unto death), which blood was the result of that faithfulness which was His own, which itself was the consequence of God’s own faithfulness unto Him.

To read human responsibility and cooperation into the achievement of our justification, is to affirm nothing but mere human philosophy, based upon nothing better than mistaken inference from Scripture—itself founded upon nothing else than human ethics.

To do so, is to deny the gratuitous grace of God through which alone our justification is achieved. As a result, where we ought to be boasting solely in God through Christ, since we see our own faith—or rather, our own “responsibility” for our own faith—as the key to our own salvation, we end up boasting in ourselves instead.

When Paul wishes to speak of the believer’s faith in (i.e., “into”) Christ, he does so not by means of a genitive noun apart from a preposition, but by means of an accusative (i.e., objective) noun together with an accusative preposition: “… rejoicing and observing your order and the stability of your faith in (i.e., “into”) Christ” (Col. 2:5).

A parallel expression to the faith of Christ, is that of the grace of Christ: “grace which is of the One Man, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:15). It would never occur to anyone to translate this text as “grace in Christ” (that is, grace “in” Christ in the sense that it is grace directed toward Christ), much less to claim that it speaks of the believer’s grace! Yet the only real difference between the genitive “of Christ” here and that in Romans 3:22 and similar passages, is that here the phrase is appended as a modifier of grace, while in Romans 3:22 and allied texts (e.g., Gal. 2:16,20) the same phrase functions as a modifier of faith.

Similarly, just as Romans 3:3 speaks of “the faithfulness of God,” Romans 3:22 and 26 speak of the “faithfulness of Jesus Christ,” the “faithfulness of Jesus.” Further, the phrase “the faith of Abraham” in Romans 4:16 forms a precise formal parallel to the phrase “the faith of Jesus” in Romans 3:26. Thus, as these parallels between the faith of Abraham and the faith of Christ make clear, “the faith of Christ” refers to His faithful obedience unto death; our Lord’s trust in God concerning the cross.

The very notion that those texts which say “faith of Christ” nonetheless have in view faith in Christ—namely the believer’s own faith in Christ—is but the stepchild of the long-standing tradition that affirms that “justification by faith” means man’s justification not by his performing works of law, but by his acceptance of Christ and assenting to faith in Him. The idea is that man saves himself, or if it is preferred, qualifies for God to save him, not by a former method, that of performing righteous deeds, but by a new method, that of acquiescing in faith.

Traditional theology is not merely saying that salvation comes upon believing in Christ, and not apart from or prior to. What it is also saying (even if more implicitly than explicitly) is that salvation is of the nature of an exchange,
a reward, requital, or compensation. When preachers say that salvation is “by faith [i.e., man’s faith],” they are using “by” in a transactional sense, according to the meeting of a requirement (as in, “by doing your work, you are entitled to your wages”).

The phrase “faith of-Christ,” however, is parallel to and must agree with the essence of the evangel itself, the revelation that we are “being justified gratuitously in [God’s] grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom.3:24). The deliverance is not said to be through our faith in Christ Jesus, but through Christ Jesus Himself. Further, it will not do to attempt to avoid this truth by artfully claiming that while this is so, it is only so on the “condition” (i.e., based upon a requirement) that we accept and believe on Christ. Any such claim is spurious; for we are not justified on a “conditional” basis that we meet some sort of requirement. Instead, we are justified apart from law, on a gratuitous and gracious basis, which precludes any and all requirements.

Therefore, all passages which declaim “the faith of Jesus Christ,” out of which we are justified, must be understood to be referring to a faith which is His own: Christ’s own perfect faith—not man’s faulty faith in Him.

Of course we ourselves can only speak of our justification by means of our own faith, since it is by faith that we apprehend what God has achieved through the work of the cross, even as what He will yet achieve in the eons ahead, when His promises are fulfilled. Still, our faith only gains for us a recognition of the justification which God has already established for us, through the faith which inheres in Christ, the faith of Jesus Christ Himself (cf Rom.4:25,5:1; 5:9).

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THE SLAVERY OF SIN

Saul made havoc of the church (Acts 8:3). Is it poetic justice that the church has made more than havoc of Paul? It has retaliated in its apostate days, and with all of Saul’s devotion to dogmatic traditionalism, in the names of its own high priests, continues to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the doctrines and teachings of Paul. Saul did not understand the church, and the church has never yet understood Paul. Saul’s butchery of the apostolic church has its comparison in the butchery of Pauline truth by an apostate church.

If Paul were to visit one of our “modern” churches one of the first things he would have to do would be to assert and vindicate his apostleship. To them he is more of a philosopher than an apostle. Instead of explaining, he needs explanation. He complicates rather than explicates the problem of the early church. The modern church would be much more comfortable if it could erase him from all consideration. Saul, however, could not get rid of the church, nor can the church on its part succeed in ridding itself of Paul.

There was nothing in Paul’s gospel to make him ashamed. He did not have the ministerial cough when he came to speak of destiny. He did not “hem” or “haw” when the duration of sin was involved. If there be anything in our doctrine touching on the ultimates of the gospel that cannot be preached gladly and joyously, depend upon it that it is no part of Paul’s gospel, for that was, and is, the gospel of the unashamed (Rom.1:16). When orthodox advocates say how saddened they are when they come to speak
of the future of the race, and even express wishes that their Bibles taught otherwise than they think they do, then and there, they are doing something Paul never had to do, viz., blushing with shame for ideas Paul never held and never had to regret.

Republicanism in politics answers to Arminianism in theology. Arminianism is theological republicanism. Republicanism is political Arminianism. History records the passing show of man's attempts at self-government. Rule by one man has shown its failure in the various monarchies of time. Rule by all men, or, at least, the majority, is daily showing its incompetence. So the race disintegrates and crumbles into the atomism created by sin. Nations are but multiplied individuals, they murder, they steal, they lie, and do on a larger scale what the individual does on a smaller one. The difference between them is amply explained by the multiplication table. So it matters not when we come to Romans three how we understood what is meant by the "all" that Paul uses. All nations, all families, or all individuals are equally inclusive.

ALL ARE SINNERS

It has been suggested in dealing with this same sweeping word when found in a context dealing with final salvation and redemption that it merely means “all without distinction” and not “all without exception.” In that case the fulfillment of some of the most glorious forecasts of Christ’s redemption work could be literally fulfilled and yet the fulfillment be a poverty-stricken one. Taking Jew and gentile as the great distinction made in the human race, then if but one solitary Jew and but one solitary gentile were the sum total of redeemed humanity this would yet be a literal fulfillment of “all without distinction.” A similar method of interpretation would reduce Romans three to an indictment, not of the race, but of a few of the worst criminals in it. “All have sinned” is “all without exception or distinction,” as is the prophecy that all shall yet be reconciled to God. If a certain type of Calvinist employs such doubtful weapons against the “all” of redemption he should not cavil if the Socinian employs the same armory when attacking the “all” that speaks of human ruin.

Let us, however, suppose that someone objects that “their feet are swift to shed blood” is not true of all without exception, what then? We are not all actually murderers; our hands have not been stained with human gore. The flagrant crimes of the Decalogue could not be laid to our doors by our fellowmen. But our racial humanity is back of every crime committed; it is our humanity that has lied, stolen, blasphemed, and murdered. That humanity is ours: that humanity is us. And one who could read the secrets of the human heart, as an open page, could trace the acts of adultery to the longing thought. Are we not then all murderers, all thieves, all blasphemers? How can we escape the thrust of divine truth? It takes the hammer of divine truth to smash the Arminianism out of us. It smashed it out of Paul before he could write “In me . . . dwelleth NO GOOD THING.” And when this happens to a man he cannot be even a republican, for one who knows he cannot rule himself well knows he cannot rule his fellows.

HUMAN SIN AND DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS

We would now glance at the fourth chapter of Romans, a chapter which is radiant with light concerning the gospel of the unashamed. The absoluteness of the divine grace is illustrated here. One would think after the dreadful story of chapters one and three that nothing further need be said as to man’s ability to do anything but rot. The contrast continuously before us in Romans is precisely between human rottenness and divine righteousness. The flesh can produce the former and nothing but the former. The source
of such filth and vice and crime cannot and consequently will not believe in Christ. The reference to circumcision in this fourth chapter comes aptly after the description in the earlier chapters of what the flesh does, and before that great illustration of God’s way of salvation found in the birth of Isaac. Circumcision was commanded only after Abraham’s experience of the failure of the flesh (Gen. 16 and 17:9). When Ishmael was born Sarah realized her deadness (Gen. 16:12), but it would not seem as if Abraham had as yet reached that point where he could “consider his own body as dead.” What he needed to learn was that the promise was to be fulfilled not by God and Abram and Sarai; nor by God and Abram; nor by God and Sarai. The divine title which was used for the first time immediately after the fleshly experience concerning Ishmael, showed that the divine promise was to be fulfilled, and could be fulfilled, only by the almighty god (Gen. 17:1). Ishmael was the result of the weakling Abram’s will. Isaac was to be the fruit of the will of the Almighty God.

In Genesis seventeen we have no “will you” or “if you will,” instead we find the sevenfold I will of the almighty god. We may draw a comparison between Genesis sixteen and seventeen and Romans seven and eight. Romans seven is the Abram chapter with its redundant “I”s. In Romans eight we have the Almighty God of Abraham with its “He will” so blessedly repeated, without a solitary condition being attached thereto. Romans seven records the defeat of the weakling (verse 23); Romans eight, the victory of Almighty God.

Now after the covenant of Genesis seventeen was made, based not upon human ability but upon the ability of the Almighty, the token of this covenant was given which was a symbol of death to the flesh. Isaac may be called a child of resurrection. Abraham’s faith as to the promised seed rested in a God Who “quickeneth the dead.” Isaac could not come from a dead Abram. Can living faith come from a dead heart? Can a dead eye see? Can a dead brain think? When they can we shall have reason to believe that love to God can come from the carnal heart, and faith in Christ from the souls of those who hate Him.

Turn again to God’s revelation of His omnipotence in Genesis seventeen. Think once more of His disclosure, “I am the Almighty God.” That was the signature on Abraham’s check. Read over the “I will’s” again and think how vast the undertaking of God. It involved the control and government of centuries of unwritten human history, the acts and decisions of earthly monarchies, and the movements of national life, so that in the end, at some unknown future date, these promises should each and all be fulfilled. This involved as well the channeling of a myriad of human choices into effecting the divine purpose. Who is sufficient for these things? The almighty god! The God of Isaac! The God Who brings life out of death!

Man talks, or rather prattles, of his “sovereign choice.” There is only room for one “sovereign choice” in the universe. God always has the last word. Man says “Give me liberty or give me death.” Man thinks liberty and death are alternatives. Death is not alternative to liberty; it is a consequence of it. Give man liberty and you give him death. Adam had this boasted freedom, and “in Adam all are dying.”

BOASTING EXCLUDED

“Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith.” There is no ground for human pride in Romans one or three, where the works of the flesh are apparent. No excuse for boasting in the vain thoughts of philosophy. But could not man glory in
his faith? Does not the Scripture repeatedly say it was Abraham's faith? True, it does thus speak of it, but we find a parallel in the way God spoke of Isaac. Ishmael was Abraham's true child. Isaac was not as truly his child as was Ishmael. Nevertheless, when God would put Abraham's faith to the test He speaks of Isaac thus: "thy son, thine only son, Isaac." The son that was his is not recognized as his, and the son that was not his is counted as "thine only son." And Abraham's faith no less than Abraham's child was the gift of God.

The theologian will aid the philosopher by suggesting that the gospel offer to "whosoever will" accepts man's freedom as a fact to be reckoned with, and without which no guilt could result from refusing the offer of grace. Apart from the word of God upon such a tremendous subject all man can offer upon this problem is an opinion, the value of which is merely more matter of opinion. If we can find out what God says upon this matter it will be no longer a puzzle. And, if we can discover a consistency in God's dealings with man's supposed freedom or ability in all the scriptures that record them, then we shall have an end to all argument upon the matter.

**HUMAN INABILITY**

When Israel received the law they were as sure of their ability to obey as the modern church is of its freedom to believe, "All ... we will do." Now a concise summary of the law in its divine and human aspects was given by Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart ... thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Here it is, and it speaks to man as if he had the ability to do so. Later, man is given the gospel as if he had the ability to believe it. However, we are left in no doubt upon the matter by Paul. If the requirements of the law may be said to concern the doing, as the gospel concerns the willing of God's good pleasure, then Paul tells us that neither the willing nor the doing can be done by us until they are done by God through us: "both to will and to do" (Phil.2:13).

The candlelight of philosophy has been appealed to by many who prefer it to the blazing sunlight of revelation. We have seen Plato's connection with the dogma of the soul's immortality. We have suggested the way in which Aristotle with his theory of eternal eons has helped create the ferocious deity of Christendom. Another philosopher, the more recent Kant, is appealed to as an authority on the subject of human freedom. His philosophic proof of man's ability may be found expressed in his dictum: "I ought; therefore I can." Viewed in the sunlight of Paul's doctrine of the law, or the simple summary of its requirements as given by Christ, what becomes of Kant's philosophy? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart"—true, I ought, but can I? The man who said "I can" was Kant! Neither can I! Well indeed, could another Festus say to our modern churches: "Much philosophy hath made thee mad."